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Relig. Phil.

THE WORKS

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A NEW EDITION, IN TWELVE VOLUMES,
WITH A COPIOUS INDEX.

VOLUME II.

OXFORD:
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

MDCCCXLIV.

HOW FAR THE MINISTRY OF MEN

IS NECESSARY FOR

PLANTING TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH ;

AND RETAINING THE UNITY OF IT PLANTED.

THE SECOND BOOK OF COMMENTS UPON THE CREED, CONTINUED.

SECT. III.

That the continual Practice of Heretics in urging Scriptures to establish Heresy, and the Diversity of Opinions amongst the Learned about the Sense of them, is no just Exception why they should not be acknowledged as the sole, entire, and complete Rule of Faith.

OUT of the former discourse, their other objections are almost answered already ; and they be especially two : the first, If the scriptures be plain and easy, how comes it to pass that there should be such contentions amongst the learned about them ? or whence is it, that every heretic is so forward to urge scriptures for his opinion even to the death ? The second lies (as it were) in the womb of this, (as this did in the

former's,) and drawn out in its proper shape, is thus : There can be no certain means of taking up controversies or contentions in the church, but only by admitting an infallible authority for deciding all controversies *viva voce*, seeing the scripture is always made a party on all sides in such contentions.

2. In the former objection they indict the scriptures as the principal; in the latter, our church as an abettor of such quarrels and contentions as it breeds. For our church we shall answer in the next, for God's word in this present section.

CHAP. XIX.

Containing the true State of the Question, with the Adversaries' general Objections against the Truth.

1. IT cannot be denied that always there have been, and always will continue, contentions amongst learned men in points of faith or doctrine, or about the true sense or meaning of scriptures in these and other cases. For thus much these scriptures themselves do plainly witness, "*Oportet esse hæreses :*" *For there must be heresies, even among you, that they which are approved among you might be known*^s. But the question is not, whether there have been, now are, or always shall continue many contentions about the sense of scripture : but first, whether the scriptures have not plainly set down the original causes and nurses of such contentions, and the means how to avoid them, (so men will be ruled by them,) most plain for this purpose ; or, secondly, whether, not submitting their wills, desires, and affections unto these plain and perspicuous
268 rules of life, this supposed infallible rule of the Romish

^s 1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Pet. ii. 1.

church can prevent, remove, or compose all such contentions, according to the truth, and cause men steadfastly hold *the unity of faith in the bond of peace.*

3. The causes of contentions about the sense of scriptures are the very same with the forementioned^t, which made the scriptures unto sundry seem obscure; or the same which make men to mistake their true sense and meaning. For even these wars and contentions whereof we speak (specially these) arise from lusts, which fight in our members: *We lust and have not, we envy and have indignation, and cannot obtain: we fight and war, and get nothing*, (not the truth which we seek,) *because we ask it not*^u. Do not such as contend most about the true sense, ask it most? Doth not every heretic, the earnestest he is, profess that he prays for the truth so much the more fervently? Yea, but such men receive not that which they so earnestly ask, *because they ask it amiss*. They desire skill in scripture to advance their own conceits, and maintain their foolish and carnal affections, otherwise *asking they should have, and seeking they should find*^x, especially the true sense and meaning of God's word, which must instruct us how to frame all our other petitions unto God aright.

4. These and infinite like places we acknowledge, plainly declaring the causes of contentions, and as many more, (some of which shall be here and there inserted,) directing us how to avoid all occasions of strife and debate. Both which if we observe, contentions will quickly cease; which, those not observed, must increase, as a just punishment of truth neglected,

^t So Beda gathers out of Austin. Ex ipso animali sensu (quia homo animalis non percipit quæ sunt Spiritus Dei) omnes dis-

sensiones et schismata generantur. Beda in 1 Cor. ii. 14.

^u James iv. 3.

^x Matt. vii. 7.

contradicted, or low esteemed, notwithstanding the best endeavours of any authority upon earth imaginable to the contrary.

5. But some perhaps will demand, Is there no use of human authority in this case? Yes: as for the begetting of true and lively faith we suppose the live-voice of an ordinary ministry, as the organ whereby the written word must be conveyed to our spirits; so for retaining *the unity of this faith in the bond of peace*, for suppressing or preventing all occasions of schisms, heresies, or contentions, we acknowledge the necessary use of a lawful magistracy; yet no infallibility in either. The proper end and use of both, is to espouse men's souls with an indissoluble knot of love and loyalty unto the written word, the only infallible rule of that faith whereby they live: the one, by unfolding the general points or maxims of Christian faith; the other, by constraining them, at least, to a civil practice of undoubted principles acknowledged by all, and inhibiting such courses as the moral precepts of this canon have detected for causes and nurses of contention. Our adversaries, whether out of wilful malice or oversight, or out of both, (according to the diversities of their tempers,) have taken occasion to traduce our church's doctrine, as if it admitted no means for preventing or composing contentions, but only the bare letter of scripture; whereas we all teach, that the written word is the only means infallible, not the only means simply, for effecting both. Nor doth it skill how necessary either ministerial expositions or juridical decisions be, for bringing us unto, or retaining us in, the unity of the truth professed; for not necessity of means, but infallibility of direction is the proper unseparable condition of the rule of faith. And seeing God's word only endures for ever, and therefore

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only is infallible ; it must be the sole rule of faith, how many or how necessary soever the means be that must bring us to the true knowledge of it.

6. Valentian and Sacro-boscus think it all one, to acknowledge no ecclesiastical authority or use of ministry, and not to acknowledge an infallibility in both. But this is a position devoid both of sense and reason. For, as our senses, though of themselves only capable of particular and material objects, subject to change and contingency, are the necessary and only ordinary means whereby our intellective faculty is brought to apprehend universal and immaterial principles, whose truth is necessary, everlasting, and immutable : so may the ministry and magistracy, though both in themselves fallible and obnoxious to errors, be the necessary and only ordinary means whereby we are brought (as it were by a sensible induction) to the infallible acknowledgment of the supernatural, divine, eternal truths, which are the proper object of the illuminated or spiritual, as immaterial and universal principles are of the natural understanding ; which shall (God willing) be declared hereafter. In this place I only thought good to forewarn the reader of this hiatus in our adversaries' collections, whereunto the blind and ignorant English papist, led by such blinded foreign guides as Valentian and Sacro-boscus, (who either did not or would not know what our church in this point doth hold,) fall headlong in the very first entrance of this dispute.

The grossness of our adversaries' exceptions being a branch of their general extremity mentioned cap. 4. sect. 1, further to be prosecuted, lib. 3. sect. 3. cap. 11.

7. But in this, as in the former question, it shall not be amiss to propose our adversaries' principal arguments and exceptions against our church's doctrine, in admitting the scripture for the rule of faith. And I would request any man, that is able to judge of the force and strength of an argument, to read the best

learned and most esteemed of our adversaries, for the further confirmation of this truth which we teach. Against which, some (who have not sought into their writings) may happily imagine, that much more hath or might be said by any of them, than can be found in all their writings. Whereas Bellarmine and Valentian, two excellent scholars and most judicious divines, (where their wits were their own,) and all other good writers of their side whom I could hitherto meet with, by reason of the barrenness of their matter, and shallow, unsettled foundation of their infallible church, have performed as good service to our cause in this present controversy, as that Roman orator, famous for his unskilfulness in Augustus his time, did to the parties whom he accused: "I would to God," said the emperor, "this foolish fellow had accused my gallery," which had been long in building, "for then it had been absolved;" that is, according to the use of this word in Latin, "finished ere this." In this case we have his wish. And for the edification of mine own faith in this point, I must (out of the sincerity of a good conscience) profess, I would not for any good on earth, but Bellarmine, Valentian, and other grand patrons or plausible advocates of the pope's cause, (especially Valentian,) had taken such earnest pains in accusing our church's doctrine; for they have most clearly acquitted it, in that we may justly presume there can be no more said against it. And whether all they have said or can say be aught, I leave it to the
270 judicious reader's judgment: I will set down some of their objections, and then prosecute their general topic, or forms of their arguments, whence all particulars, which in this case they can bring, must receive their whole strength.

8. "All heretics," saith St. Augustine, "which ad-

mit the authority of scriptures"—for some rejected all or most parts of the sacred canon—"seem to themselves to follow the scriptures, whenas indeed they follow their own errors^y." "Nor do heresies," saith the same Father in another place^z, "and other naughty opinions which ensnare men's souls, spring from any other root than this, that the right sense of scripture conceived amiss, and yet so conceived, is boldly and rashly avouched."

9. And in another book of Augustine it is said, (Valentian would have the saying well observed, as it shall be to his shame,) "that heretics do not corrupt only the obscure and difficult, but even the plain and easy places of scriptures^a; and our Saviour Christ," as this writer addeth^b, "did intimate how obnoxious the evangelical doctrine was to this corruption by heretics, when he forewarned us to beware of false prophets. Heretics, saith he, seem to be prophets, because they make a fair show of scripture phrases, which are as

y Omnes hæretici qui scripturas in autoritate recipiunt, ipsas sibi videntur sectari, cum suos potius sectentur errores. Aug. Epist. 222. ad Consensum.

z Neque enim natæ sunt hæreses et quædam dogmata perversitatis illaqueantia animas, nisi dum scripturæ bonæ intelligantur non bene; et quod in iis non bene intelligitur, etiam temere et audacter asseritur. Tract. 18. in Johan.

a Non modo locos scripturæ obscuros, sed etiam alios qui sunt aperti et clari corrumpi ab hæreticis, lib. 2. de nuptiis et con. cap. 31.

b Christus etiam facillime ab hæreticis doctrinam corrumpi

subindicavit, cum admonuit ut ab iis tanquam a falsis prophetis caueremus.—Videntur prophetæ, quoniam scripturæ verba proferunt, quæ divinæ doctrinæ sunt character et quasi externa species, sed prophetæ non sunt, quoniam sub ea verborum divinorum externa specie non ostendunt nobis genuinam S.S. sententiam, sed adulterinas suas perversasque opiniones sacrilege in verbis sacris a se collocatas, tanquam abominationem (ut eleganter Origenes Homil. 29. in Matt. notavit) stantem in loco sancto. Eadem de causa vocantur lupi rapaces, qui vestimentis induti sunt ovium. Valent. tom. 3. in Aquinatem. Disputat. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. paragr. 6.

the character or external shape of heavenly doctrine. But prophets they are not, because under the outward show of heavenly words they manifest not the native sense and meaning of the Holy Ghost, but their own adulterate, corrupt opinions, sacrilegiously invested by them in sacred phrase, as it were *the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place*, as Origen elegantly notes, Hom. 29. in Matt. By the same analogy are they called *ravening wolves, being arrayed in sheep's clothing*," &c.

10. These and like places are brought by Valentian (as the title and conclusion of that paragraph shew) to this purpose: "That seeing all heretics may and do easily pervert the scriptures, as St. Peter saith, *to their own destruction*; we should hence be instructed, that this universal authority, and most behoveful for the salvation of all, which we seek as the common judge in all points of faith, cannot be seated in the scripture alone^c."

11. Another mark whereat these fiery darts do usually aim is, to fasten the conceit of heresy upon our church, seeing it hath always been the practice of heretics to cover their wicked imaginations with sacred phrase, and, as Lyrinensis saith, "to intersperse or straw their depraved opinions with the sweet and fragrant sentences of scripture as with some precious spice, lest the exhalation of their native smell might bewray their corruption to the reader." This is a
271 commonplace trodden almost bare by the English pamphleting papist, who learns the articles of his Ro-

^c Hæc ideo recitavi, ut quoniam universi hæretici facillime scripturas omnes in suam perditionem sicut D. Petrus inquit depravant. (2 Pet. iii.) Intelligamus certe non in scripturis

solis constitutam esse. universalem illam, et ad salutem hominum accommodatissimam auctoritatem, totius fidei judicem, quam inquirimus. Valent. loc. citat.

man creed, and general heads of controversies betwixt us, with their usual arguments or exceptions against our doctrine, no otherwise than the fiddler doth his song; holding it sufficient for his part to afford a mimic's face, scurrilous style, or apish gesture, unto the inventions of Bellarmine, Valentian, or some foreign Jesuit's brain. And as it is hard for us to speak, though in general terms, against any sin in a country parish, but one or other will persuade himself that we aim at his overthwart neighbour, unto whom, perhaps, our reproofs are less applicable than unto him that thus applies them; so it is very easy for this mimical crew to persuade the ignorant or discontented people, that every minister, whose person or behaviour, upon what respect soever, they dislike, is the very man meant by the ancient Father and our Saviour in the former general allegations; if he use but the phrase of scripture, not the character of that foreign beast; whereas their objections duly examined can hurt none but the objectors.

CHAP. XX.

That the former Objections (and all of like kind, drawn from the cunning Practice of Heretics, in colouring false Opinions by Scripture) are most forcible to confirm ours, and confound the Adversaries' Doctrine.

1. MUSTER they as many authorities or experiments of this rank as they list, we know the strength and nature of their weapons. They are dangerous indeed to such as have not put on the breastplate of righteousness, or shield of faith: but yet (God be praised) as sharp at the one end as at the other, and they had need to be wary how and against whom they use them. For beaten back directly by the defendants, they may be as fair to kill the thrower, at the rebound, as

them against whom they were first intended. For proof hereof, look how easily we can retort all they have thrown at us upon themselves. It hath been the practice of heretics (say they) to misinterpret scriptures, and pretend their authority for countenancing errors. This wounds not us, except we were naked of all syllogistical armour of proof. For they should prove (if they will conclude aught to our prejudice) that none but heretics have used scriptures' authority to confirm their opinions. For if orthodox and truly religious writers, in the best and flourishing ages of the church, have been as copious and industrious in citing authorities of scriptures for their opinions as heretics; this argument proves nothing against us, why we may not be orthodoxes and true catholics as well as heretics. That this hath been the practice of heretics, we acknowledge; and having received this their blow, we can return their own weapons upon them, with greater probability of better speed.

272 2. It hath been the practice of sundry heretics, never of any orthodox, to refuse their trial by scripture, and flee unto traditions. It hath been the continual practice of most monstrous and blasphemous impostors, of false Messiahs, and such as oppose themselves against Christ; of Mahomet, and such like, to plead the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost, and a supreme authority over others, without subjection to any trial, either by scripture or other means. If most of them have failed in getting so many steadfast followers as the pope now hath, and for many years hath had; it is most likely this was either because their heresies were more open, and more easy to be descried; or they less cunning in countenancing them by scriptures, antiquity, or other plausible shows of custom, tradition,

Our appealing to scriptures alone is no such presumption of heresy in us, as the refusal of trial by them is of Antichristianism in the adversary.

or the like. For we all know that Antichrist's greatness must grow by the multitude of his resolute followers, that *God shall send them* (be they never so many) *strong delusions, that they should believe lies*^e; that his coming is by the working of Satan, (who can urge scripture as cunningly to maintain falsehood as any heretic,) *and by all power, and signs, and lying wonders*. So that it will be hard to discover or prevent his coming, unless men be very cunning and expert in these scriptures, the rule of truth, the only light whereby all falsehood must be discovered.

3. That they may once for all know how little we fear their force, we will set our bodies so as they shall not miss them, and prepare ourselves to take the full strength and dint of all their strokes. The heretics of old time (say they) have urged scriptures for their doctrine vehemently and copiously: we will give them better hold, and help them to press this point a little harder; they did urge scriptures most cunningly, most subtilly, and hereby deceived many, yea almost staggered the very elect. What if they did? so would Pharaoh's enchanters have obstupified most of the Israelites beside Moses and Aaron: but did their cunning juggling prejudice the truth of Moses' miracles? or did he neglect to manifest the power of God, for fear lest he should be censured for such an one as they were, only more cunning in his craft? Their wicked cunning served as a foil so to set forth his heavenly skill, as the enchanters themselves could not but see the finger of God in his working: herein more ingenuous than the modern Jesuits; who in so clear a point as this we now dispute, after so many foils as they have taken, will not acknowledge the force of that scripture in them-

^e 2 Thess. ii. 11.

selves ; *Magna est veritas et prævalet*. The reason is, because they will not come into the open court, to try their skill before impartial judges.

4. The Devil, we all know, did urge the scripture to our Saviour with great skill and dexterity. Had he been the only follower or first founder of this practice, or the first of all we had read of, we should have been (until we had found some better example and warrant for it) as much afraid to have imitated him herein, as that scrupulous monk was to wear his hood; because he thought the Devil had been the first that ever had worn one, being usually painted in that habit, when he came to tempt our Saviour Christ, and that story he thought in all likelihood to be as ancient as the first hood. But with what weapon did our Saviour vanquish Satan, that had set upon him with scripture? Did he charge him *sub pœna anathematis* to be silent? or did he crave the church's peace under pain of greater penalties? or did he appeal unto the infallible authority, or supreme tribunal of the Jewish church? did he except against him for using an unlawful, heretical weapon? can you deny that he foiled him with these very weapons wherewith we now contend that all heretics (Satan's followers) are to be assaulted and repulsed, ere they can be lawfully foiled, and quite overthrown? And here I would beseech all soberminded Christians, even as they love our Saviour Christ, (the chief Captain of the Lord's host, *the author and finisher of our faith*,) and as they hate Satan himself, (the head and prince of all God's, Christ's, and our enemies,) to consider these subsequent reasons well, and weigh this instance in the quiet, calm, and settled motions of their hearts.

5. If Satan can thus teach heretics, and other his

like wicked instruments, such great skill and cunning in scriptures, as they can thereby countenance errors, and deceive others with a show of godliness; why should we not hold it as a principal article of our faith, that Christ Jesus is able to instruct his chosen immediately, in the true sense and meaning of the same scriptures, so as they may hereby grow skilful enough, to retain such as love the truth in the knowledge of truth, and defend themselves and others against the oppositions of heretics, although they bring their arguments out of scripture. For, first, we know and believe that Christ is stronger than Satan; for he *hath bound that strong man*. Secondly, that he is better skilled in scripture; for after his first entrance into his prophetic or sacerdotal function, he put him hereby to flight, and at his passion threw him out of his hold^f. Satan's strength since that time hath been less, and Christ's power greater; so that in his strength we may be stronger than all Satan's followers. Thirdly, we know that the scripture is in itself much more favourable unto truth than unto falsehood; and (*cæteris paribus*) far more apt to confirm true religion, and instruct in points of faith, than to establish heresy, or fill the world with errors; only the sons of darkness have been wiser in their generation than such as should be, or (in some measure) are the sons of light. And if heretics may seem to have had the better sometimes of the orthodox, in trying controversies by scripture, this doubtless was for no other reason but only this; their alacrity and industry in searching scriptures for maintenance of errors, was greater than the others' for establishment and confirmation of the truth; otherwise, as we said before, the truth is more consonant to the

What advantage the orthodoxes have of heretics in trial of controversies by scriptures.

The arguments proposed in

^f Matt. iv. *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

the last chapter, can have no ground to prove ought against us but this : Satan is more powerful or skilful in scriptures than Christ ; or more ready to help his instruments than Christ to assist his chosen.

purity and integrity of sacred writ, than any falsehood (though never so fair in show) can be : and Christ Jesus is more powerful and more skilful, more able and more willing to assist and strengthen such as follow him, than Satan is to enable his wicked instruments. Seeing then by these scriptures he hath crushed Satan's head, and put him to flight ; why should his faithful followers despair, by the same weapons, to foil and slay Satan's servants, so they will be as industrious to use them, as the others are to abuse them. Nor will you (I hope) deny that Christ is present perpetually to his true church, as well as Satan is to heretics. Say then what you can or dare, why ye should think it strange or impossible, that he should teach all faithful souls the true sense and meaning of his word, immediately by his blessed Spirit working with the ministry of saints ; (without a vicar-general on earth ;) as well as Satan doth heretics the counterfeit sense, or false, but fair seeming meaning of it immediately by himself or his wicked spirits. For we never heard that Satan had any vicar-general by whom he teacheth heretics all their cunning, unless this be the pope : which if he be, then is he not vicar-general unto Christ.

6. *Seeing* (beloved Christians) *we are compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses*, whereof not one, without open infidelity, can be impeached ; let us not disdain to take the practice of *Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith*, as a pattern well befitting our imitation. Not to be as industrious in searching the inward sense and secret meaning, as heretics in urging the outward letter of the law, were not to follow the footsteps of a victorious Lord, most good and gracious to his followers, with as great alacrity as vanquished Satan's wicked instruments do his : both

(if not detested by us, as the foulest shame, that in this life can befall us) will breed our everlasting confusion in the life to come.

7. That I may dispute with such as make a jest of scriptures, according to their childish folly; if by this means I might possibly cure their impiety: tell us, I pray, ye doctors of Rome, many of whom I know to be men of learning, wit, and spirit, and for this reason (as I should think) more unwilling to make yourselves palpably ridiculous to every child or novice in arts, (howsoever, unto all sorts you strive to make Christ's practice such:) tell us, what is your counsel in this choice? Shall we forsake Christ, our, yea St. Peter's best Master, to become scholars unto your Staphilus, or Hosius collier? who (if their reports be true) did sooner put the Devil to silence with this doctrine of your church's infallibility, than Christ did, for all his scripture; for the Devil, as the evangelist tells us^h, departed not from our Saviour before the third blow, "Avoid, Satan!" able to abide the collier but two, or rather one a little doubled, "I believe as the church believes, and the church believes as I believe." So much by your doctrine doth the Devil fear the very name of your church, though in a collier's mouth, more than the word of God, albeit uttered by the Son of God himself.

8. But we know the proverb too well, "Like to like;" children and ignorant people are not ignorant, that the Devil will be commanded by such as study the black art: no marvel if he suffer himself upon good terms to be put down by a collier. And as I will not peremptorily deny but the story might be true, so questionless such as most believe it, mightily mistake the true cause of Satan's sudden silence; for the truer the story

^h Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10.

were, the likelier were it he should hold his peace, as soon as he heard the collier believe as he would have him. This is a catechism in its kind so perfect and absolute, so well suiting to the old serpent's purpose, that if hell might have a general vacancy from all other employments, for time as long as hath been since Lucifer's fall, not all the powers therein could devise what one word might be added, what detracted ; unless perhaps they would express what the collier happily understood, " I believe as the church Romish believes, and
275 the church Romish as I believe ;" whose consequence is, Both shall believe whatsoever hell would have them. The use of such rustic weapons as these was perhaps on your part not unnecessary in that rude world, wherein Lindan's panoply went for approved harness, or Ecchius' bolts for good artillery ; but should you use the like now, every puny in our schools that knows but how to manage an argument, (of which God be praised we have enough for a whole army,) shall match your great Goliath, whilst they thus keep aloof, and lay your stoutest champions in the dust, by returning their own or like shot upon them.

CHAP. XXI.

The pretended Excellency of the supposed Roman Rule, for composing Controversies, impeached by the Frequency of Heresies in the primitive Church, and the Imperfection of that Union, whereof since that Time they so much boast.

1. BUT let us leave off skirmishing afar off, and come a little nearer to the point. You are content to join with us in this, that it hath been the practice of heretics from time to time, to stand much upon the authority of scriptures ; then were not Luther and Calvin the first that ever made this odious comparison betwixt God's word and the pope's. Nay, you will

not deny but this practice of urging scripture was most frequent, and the truth most troubled hereby in the primitive church. If a man might ask you, where was this your supposed infallibility then? in the swaddling clouts or unborn? If then unborn, it is too young to make younger brethren of all congregations else; too young to cause Christian kings and emperors subject their crowns unto your upstart mitre: if then born, albeit but in its infancy, yet such an Herculean power as you profess yours to be, which puts an *ὄντο* *πέραι* to all Christian men's thoughts in points of faith, (for to this purpose your controversors cite that place of scripture, as your Vulgar reads it, *Verba sapientum sunt tanquam clavi in altum fixi per magistrorum consilium, conscripta et a pastore uno data*; viz. the pope; *istis amplius fili mi ne requiras*;) might in all congruity have taken Hercules' motto for its word, *Cunarum labor est angues superasse mearum*: though it had lain then sleeping in the cradle, yet might it (were it such as you would make it) easily have crushed this seed of serpents in the very nest wherein they bred, and not have suffered them to grow up to flying dragons, to pester the world far and near with their deadly poison.

2. I would have you here to consider this incongruity well, which I must further prosecute in the next dispute. You plead the necessity of your church's infallibility for composing all contentions and variety of opinions about scripture sense, and yet we evidently see, (which you cannot deny,) that such bitter contentions and dangerous varieties of opinions about scripture sense, were most rife, most eagerly prosecuted and maintained, when this title of your church's infallibility (if it were just) might have been best known and

soonest assented unto. For sure the ancient Fathersⁱ, who had learned Christian obedience, always ready to give honour where honour was due, would most willingly have acknowledged so absolute a sovereignty, and could have been glad to have used the benefits of it, to have spared themselves a great deal of trouble and pains, if it could have been proved then to have been such an excellent mean for allaying all contentions amongst the learned. The pope was much to blame to let Athanasius suffer such pains, exile, and abuse by the Arian faction in the defence of the truth, if his infallibility could have composed the quarrel. Austin

ⁱ That the Fathers, if we take the literal, plain, grammatical sense of their words, attribute as much to scriptures as we do, our adversaries cannot deny. May we not then safely think they meant what their words naturally import? No; Valentinian hath found out a mystical interpretation of them. Tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. parag. 5. *Quemadmodum quando uni Personæ divinæ aliqua perfectio divinitatis absoluta tribuitur, intelligunt theologi, ab ejus perfectionis communione creaturas tantum excludi, non autem Personas alias divinas quæ sunt ejusdem naturæ: ita sancti Patres sicubi scripturæ auctoritatem solam ad fidei quæstiones finiendas valere significant: ecclesiæ certe auctoritatem, quam item pro divina habent, et quam ipsa nobis commendat scriptura, minime excludunt, sed alia sive testimonia, sive argumenta, quæ sint tantum humana. Nam si non ita intelligerent, profecto nunquam illi in controversiis fidei, ipsa per se auctoritate ec-*

clesiasticæ traditionis ad probandum uterentur. At utuntur ea ipsi frequentissime et utendum esse docent. As the non-consequence of this collection, so how far the Fathers did urge the church's authority, how the most pregnant speeches that can be found in any of their writings must be limited, will easily appear, if we consider the two former distinctions: the one between the infallible rule of faith, and the means or motives inducing us to believe: the other between that conditional assent, which in cases doubtful we must give to the visible church, and that absolute belief, which is only due unto scriptures: the Fathers used the church's authority against heretics as we do theirs against novelists, not as a rule whereby finally to examine or determine Divine truths, but as a curb to bridle presumptuous gainsaying opinions, generally received or supposed for true, by men of sincerity and skill in divine mysteries.

hath been famous throughout all generations since, for his learned labours against the Pelagian heresy ; Cyril for his accurate confutation of Nestorius ; and yet the scripture was the best weapon they knew. Neither of them did ever appeal to the pope's infallibility ; not the popes themselves, which then lived, would have used any other rule but scripture for their own defence.

3. Your usual argument is, that " unless God had left such an infallible authority as might take up all controversies, he had not sufficiently provided for his church." Then, by your consent, he left such an authority as was sufficient to perform this good service to it. To whom then did he commit it ? To the see of Rome, say you. How chanceth it your fore-elders did not put it in practice, and make the power of it better known ? This blame you cannot lay upon the Almighty ; for he, for his part, (by your confession,) provided abundantly for the peace and quiet of his church. And yet it seems the church was ill provided for, when schisms and heresies sprung so fast. This therefore was your church's fault, that bore this spiritual sword in vain, and would not use it, when the Christian world stood most in need of it, for the final decision of controversies. So then although we should grant you, that your church had sometimes the birth-right, amongst all the Israel of God ; yet might we justly say of it, as old Israel said of Reuben his eldest son, *Thy dignity is gone* ; and we were to seek this supreme authority (if God had given any such supremacy to any) in some other tribe which were likely to use it better.

4. If you reply, Your church's authority in composing controversies amongst the learned hath been better known since that flourishing age of learned and religious Fathers ; and since it hath been so well known

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and acknowledged, heresies have been more thin sown than before: (few or none till Luther arose, daring to confront the church or pope's authority with scripture :) you give us hereby just cause to suspect, that heresy had got the upper hand of truth, for the multitude of followers; that there had been a general combination in falsehood till Luther brake it. For if sundry of the ancient heretics, with whose doctrine the primitive church was pestered, could under pretence of scripture have got into supreme authority, or have established their propositions, framed (as they thought out of God's word) with strength of temporal sword, as Mahomet did his; it were great simplicity to think, that they could not have been content to have let the scriptures sleep, or have threatened all with death and destruction that should have urged them to the prejudice of their opinions, especially of such opinions as did concern their dignity. For all falsehood and spiritual blindness hates this light, and could either wish it put out, or them utterly extinct that object it to them. As he that hath wound himself into another's inheritance by some quirk in law, or captious clause not well understood, would not be much offended to have all evidences of primary copies either burnt or buried, even that by which he got it, if it, upon better consideration or more indifferent hearing, were likely to overthrow his title.

5. And if we may guess at the course of Satan's policy, in watching his opportunities to effect his purpose, by the customary fashion of secular politicians (his scholars) in like cases; most probable it is, that after these broils of dissension about the gospel of peace, so frequent in the primitive church, the great calamities and bodily affliction which followed thereon, most men grew weary of their spiritual warfare, and

became slothful in the search of scriptures, the only armoury for all munition in this kind of war. Every man afterwards, in the fresh memory of the church their mother's bleeding wounds, and the desolation which had ensued these furious broils, became more tractable to entertain conditions of peace; and Satan himself, who had sown the seeds of all the former dissension, after he saw all or most weary of war, was content to turn peacemaker for his own advantage. These were as the first preparations for laying the foundations of the mystical Babel^k, in whose erection the manner, method, and circumstances of the former's dissolution are all inverted. The building of the first was hindered by the confusion of tongues, or the division of one language into many, whence issued the scattering of the people throughout the earth^l: the second was finished by the concourse of diverse people, and the composition or confusion of different languages. For (as Goropius^m acutely observes) the present temper of modern Italian, Spanish, French (we may add of our English) dialects, was from the mixture of the Roman and barbarous tongues, whilst the natural inhabitants of these countries, (before accustomed to the 278 Roman language,) and the barbarians which at that

^k *Roma Babel rediviva*, the mystical Babel raised by compounding those elements whereinto old Babel was resolved. The dissolution of the one and the erection of the other differing but as the resolution of quicksilver into fume, and the conversion of it again into quicksilver. The city of Babylon likewise (as shall, God willing, elsewhere appear) was the true type of Rome; the one, as St. Austin compareth them, being the mo-

ther, the other the daughter, each evidently paralleling the other in most abominations: which is the reason (as I take it) why the Holy Ghost instyles Rome with the name of Babylon, whose abominations were well known to the faithful, and might serve as a light to discover Romish filthiness.

^l Gen. xi. 7.

^m In the beginning of his Hermathena.

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time overran them, were enforced to imitate each other in their words and manner of speech, that they might be the better understood in matters of necessary commerce or ordinary contracts. And this is the true reason why our ancient English Latinisms are not as the Latin Grecisms, which were derived by art and imitation from clear Helicon, extracted from the purest Roman; but from Latin of the base and vulgar stamp. This confusion of the Latin and other barbarous tongues, was but a type or picture of confounding the ancient true Roman religion with barbarous heresies, heathenish rites, and several kinds of paganisms; whilst the Romansⁿ, who had already begun to distaste the truth, sought^o by lying legends and false wonders to please the gross palate of the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Alans, Franks, and Saxons; and they again herewith delighted, were content to imitate the other in sundry sacred and religious rites, so as neither kept their ancient religion, but all embraced this mixture or new confused mass. And to speak properly, that unity whereof the adversary so much boasts, since that flourishing age of Fathers, wherein contentions were so rife, and the Roman church no better esteemed than some of her sisters, was not a positive consent in the sincere truth wrought by the Spirit of God, (as a perfect homogeneous mixture by true and lively heat,) but rather a bare negation of actual dissension, caused by a dull confusion of the dregs of error, coagulate and congealed together by

ⁿ That such was the disposition of the Romans at that time, as would easily condescend to admit a mixture of paganism, may appear out of St. Austin's first books *De Civitate Dei*, and

Salvianus de *Providentia*.

^o As may appear out of some works going under the name of Gregory the Great, and Gregory of Tours' history.

ignorance, carelessness, sloth, negligence, and want of zeal to the truth.

6. And after this composal was once so wrought, that men had felt some intermission of public dissension which they feared most: such as were industrious in the search, or would have been expert in the knowledge of scriptures, were esteemed of but as soldiers in the time of peace and ease, always suspected lest they should raise new broils, and for this reason debarred of free access unto this armory. But howsoever the practice of examining the church's authority by scripture was for many generations rare, till Luther arose; yet during all this time, that of our apostle (Acts xiv. 17.) was in this case most true, οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκε, *God did not leave himself without a witness.* In all these ages he had his martyrs, who in the fervency of their zeal earnestly sought the dissolution of the coagulated mass, and extraction of celestial quintessences therein buried; offering their bodies as fuel to the flames of persecutions that were to effect it.

7. Nor can you in reason demand we should give particular instances of such martyrs in every age. For no man of sense but will easily conceive, that your church would seek by all means possible to obliterate their fame and memory, upon whose bodies she had exercised such extreme tyranny, lest their example might encourage posterity to like resolutions. Unless Driedo had (unawares, I think) acquainted me with the provost of Stenelda's Epistle to St. Bernard, I had not known either your cruelty against the Albigenses, (or Picards, as I suppose,) or their constancy in suffering tortures, in themselves most grievous, yet attended with usages as disgraceful; both for the manner, or form, or proceeding, as injuriously inflicted, as the ground or matter of accusations brought against them were unjust

Our church was in the Romish synagogue as a little portion of fine gold in a great mass of dross, until the flames of persecution severed it and made it conspicuous.

The miserable and shameful persecution of sundry, for professing most points of our religion in St. Bernard's time.

and impious. The provost's Epistle was to this effect :

8. "I would gladly be resolved, (holy father,) might I enjoy your presence, whence it is that in heretics, the Devil's members, there should be so great resolution for defence of their heresies, as the like can scarce be found in very religious and faithful Christians. There are," saith he, "amongst us, heretics which put no confidence in the suffrages of men deceased, or prayers of saints; fastings and other afflictions of the body usually undertaken for sin, are not in their opinion necessary to the righteous; purgatory after death they acknowledge none; denying the making of our Lord's body in the sacrament of the altar; the church they affirm to be amongst them, having neither fields nor possessions. Of such we have known divers, by the multitude, misled with too much zeal, violently hailed against our will unto the flame, whose torments they not only endured with patience, but entertained with joy. I would therefore be resolved by you, (holy father,) whence so great resolution in the Devil's members should spring^p."

9. No question but this provost, which esteemed no

^p Jam olim ante annos 400. Prepositus quidam venerandus Steneldensis interrogabat beatum Bernardum; Vellem, inquit, scire, sancte pater, si præsens essem, unde in hæreticis diaboli membris tanta fortitudo in sua hæresi, quanta vix reperitur etiam in valde religiosis Christi fidelibus. Sunt, inquit, apud nos hæretici, qui in suffragiis mortuorum et orationibus sanctorum non confidunt: (mark the word, *non confidunt* :) jejunia cæterasque afflictiones quæ pro peccatis fiunt, aiunt justis non esse ne-

cessaria: purgatorium ignem post mortem non concedunt: altari corpus Christi fieri negant: ecclesiam apud se esse dicunt, non habentes agros neque possessiones. Novimus etiam ex istis nonnullos esse raptos a populis nimio zelo permotis, et nobis invitatis in ignem positos et crematos; qui tormentum ignis non solum in patientia, sed et cum lætitia introierunt. Vellem igitur scire, sancte pater, unde in diaboli membris tanta fortitudo. Driedo, lib. 4. de Eccles. dog. et scrip. cap. 5. [pars prima.]

better of them than as of heretics or Satan's members, did relate the worst opinions then known to be held by them; and yet, he (as I would have the reader note) living in their time, lays no such odious tenets to their charge, as those that lived long after, or were employed by the Romish state to write against Wickliff, Husse, or Jerome of Prague, have charged them and their followers with. Driedo tells us, he finds no direct answer by way of epistle or writing unto this venerable man's demand in particular. But out of St. Bernard's doctrine elsewhere delivered concerning like heretics, he finds this resolution: "The constancy of martyrs hath no affinity with the stubbornness of heretics; piety breeds contempt of death in the one, hardness of heart in the other^a." Such good minded men as St. Bernard, I think, had least to do in the examination of such men, most obnoxious to misinformation in the particulars of their carriage; with which the civil magistrates of France, though Romish catholics, better acquainted, have given them laudable testimonies for their honest and religious lives: and whether these mentioned by that provost were such as St. Bernard spake against in the place last cited, is more than Driedo knew. Howsoever in matters of this nature it is most true, *Bernardus non vidit omnia*, being as easy in his lifetime to be abused by crafty politicians, as his authority is now by modern Jesuits. He that will believe these men were such heretics as Driedo would make them, only because Driedo says so, may easily be persuaded that their resolution did not spring so much from true and lively faith, as from humourous obstinacy or stubborn

^a Nihil simile habet constantia istis duritia cordis contemptum
martyrum, et pertinacia hæreticorum, quia in illis pietas, in
moris operatur. Bernardus Hom. 66. in Canticum Canticorum.

pride. But while we consider all circumstances well, (though many we take from your relation, who in this
280 case relate nothing so well and truly as you should,) we have just cause to think they were not heretics, but men rightly religious, fearing God more than men, and more observant of his laws than of human traditions. For at this time, as the glory, the temporal power, and authority of your church was exceeding great, so were the hopes of these poor souls less, either of purchasing glory by contradicting, or private gains by disobeying your decrees. To attempt the one was the readiest way to procure their utter disgrace; the other, an infallible provocation of greatest danger. Your church had the whole multitude of nations as ready at her beck to applaud your cruel designs against them, as the high priests and elders had the Jewish people to approve our Saviour's condemnation. The manner of their tortures, accompanied with such certainty of ignominy and disgrace, were dreadful to the settled and deliberate cogitations of flesh and blood; their memory (for aught they could in human probability foresee) was either to sleep with their bodies, and lie buried in their ashes, or (if surviving them) to be perpetually scourged by the scurrilous pens and tongues of their bitter adversaries. No hope they had of being canonized for saints; in the vehement desire whereof some in your church have solicited the procurement of their own violent death by others' hands.

10. All these, and many other like circumstances, whiles we consider, ye may brag of the multitude and universality as a note of the true church, and we will easily grant you to have been at that time far more in number than these silly sheep, whose admirable constancy nevertheless in the heat of such extreme tyranny, and always matched with such harmless simplicity, doth make us

think, that albeit you were the greater, yet these were that *little flock*, unto whose hearts our Saviour, by his Holy Spirit of comfort, had said, *Fear not, for it is your Father's will to give you a kingdom*. Lands and possessions (as your adversaries truly object) here on earth ye have had none. But the loss is little, or rather your gain exceeding great. For these, *because these you have forsaken for the gospel's sake and mine, you shall receive lands and possessions an hundredfold, with life everlasting in the world to come*. These heretics, some of you (I imagine) would say, albeit they might pretend scriptures for the rule of faith, yet would not be ruled by scriptures when they were evidently brought against them. For your evidence of scripture to prove these points there mentioned, we know them well enough; for some of them, you profess tradition only.

CHAP. XXII.

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That our Adversaries' Objections do not so much infringe, as their Practice confirms the Sufficiency of Scriptures for composing the greatest Controversies in Religion.

1. BUT suppose many heretics (yourselves for example) will not submit their minds unto the evidence of scripture: what remedy? who can help it? *their condemnation is just, and vengeance is God's, he will repay*. Man it behoveth to see evidently, that they condemn or abuse scripture, before he adventure to inflict punishment upon them for it, lest otherwise he become an intruder into the Almighty's tribunal. But if the evidence of scripture will not, what else shall recall such from error?

2. Besides the former general allegations, let us see what more can be said, why the scriptures may not be the most effectual and infallible rule that can be ima-

gined, to guide men in the way of truth. "The authority," saith Valentian^r, "ordained by God for determining all questions of faith, is without all question most apt to discern and prevent all errors contrary to faith^s." Why may not the authority of scripture be accounted such? "The scripture," saith he, "is so framed, (yet was it God that framed it,) as experience may also teach us, that of itself alone it is so far from being a fit rule for avoiding all errors, that by the secret judgment of God it is a stumblingblock, and as a snare to the feet of the unwise, so that such as will rely upon it alone may soon trip or tread awry^t."

3. The reader must lay the blame where it is due, if these indefatigable mouths of blasphemies reiterating the like absurd impieties so oft, enforce me often to oppose the same or like answers to them. Such an occasion as God's creatures were of idolatry, the scriptures we grant may be of heresy. For of God's good creatures, wherewith the idolatrous heathen polluted themselves, the Wise Man speaks in that place whereto Valentian alludes. And such an occasion should this infallible way of the Romish church, pretended for avoiding, be of breeding heresies, were it any of God's ways, of which the wise son of Sirach saith indefinitely, *They are stumblingblocks to the wicked*^u; so

^r *Autoritas quæ ad iudicandas omnes fidei quæstiones divinitus est instituta, proculdubio est accommodatissima ad cognoscendos et cavendos errores omnes fidei contrarios. Scriptura sacra sic composita est, ut experientia etiam doceat, eam per se solam, non tam regulam accommodatam esse ad declinandos omnes errores, quam arcano Dei iudicio esse velut lapidem offensionis, et in tentationem pedibus insipientium, ut qui velint ea sola niti*

facillime impingant et errent. Valent. tom. 3. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. sect. 6.

^s The like blasphemous speeches he iterates in the very next paragraph.

^t It seems his meaning is, that the scripture, by God's just judgment, is a snare to all such as rely infallibly upon it alone, even because they rely upon it alone.

^u The place cited by him is *Wisd. xiv. 10, 11.*

was the way of life, the gospel itself, even whilst proposed and avouched by St. Peter and St. Paul. The question then must be, For what cause the scriptures are a snare to some men's feet : because they admit and embrace them for their rule of life ? If thus, either Valentian's ghost, or any Jesuit now alive, dare avouch, I say no more than the archangel said to Satan, *The Lord rebuke thee*. Only unto the unwise and wilfully wicked, because such, the Mediator and Saviour of the world, *salus ipsa*, "salvation itself," 282 was a stone of offence ; and unto all such, not scripture nor any of God's ways serve as a rule to save, but to condemn them.

4. This is the article then upon which the Jesuit must once again be examined ; whether unto such as are by God's just judgments decreed to destruction, and given over by his Holy Spirit to believe lies, and follow lying traditions or fables of man's invention, the pope's infallible authority can be a rule of life or saving faith ? If it can, then we will grant it to be a more infallible rule than scripture ; because able to control God's immutable decree : if it cannot, (as none without open and presumptuous blasphemy will say it can,) then is it no more effectual for to reclaim men from errors than the scriptures are, nor doth it any ways supply their want : *If they will not believe Moses and the prophets*, saith our Saviour, *neither will they be persuaded though one were raised from the dead*^x. Why so ? Because God hath decreed this word as the only means of salvation to such as have been partakers of it ; and such as refuse this are given over by his Spirit to the stubbornness of their own hearts : shall then the pope's infallibility make such believe ? By what means ? Are his words more effectual than

^x Luke xvi. 31.

the words of life? Are his bulls able to withstand the decrees of the Almighty? or are his curses to the disobedient more terrible, than the everlasting woes pronounced by our Saviour Christ and his prophets? more piercing than the relation of hell-pains by a messenger from the dead? By your church's continual practice, I should guess this would be your reply, (for there is no other left,) That the pope can constrain men to subscribe to his decrees by fire and sword. This might command their hands or tongues, but not their minds. For the Jesuits would teach such as feared the smart of their fleshly members, to cozen their conscience for saving their bodies, with this distinction, *Juravi lingua, mentem injuratum gero*. And if fire and sword be the best weapons of spiritual warfare, or unrelenting persecutions the ensigns of infallible authority, then the greater tyrants may be always the more infallible teachers: but these weapons, by your best writers' consent, ye may not use against any but such as are already admitted into Christ's fold: *Quæ foris sunt, judicabit Deus*: "Such as are without, God will judge^y." The pope may such as are within, in what manner, for what cause, he please, not liable to any account, whether in so doing he do right or wrong. Let the fruits of our practice then witness, whether what is by you objected to us for using our Saviour's language, may not by fit analogy be verified of yourselves in this point, whether we or ye be the men of whom our Saviour gave the world warning, when he told *of false prophets, outwardly appearing in sheep's clothing, being inwardly ravening wolves*. Unto such as are by us won to the gospel, we grant that Christian liberty after, which before their conversion

^y So the council of Trent itself declares, Sess. 14. cap. 2.

we promised. Your factors abroad (as in the Indies or Japan) appear to men in sheep's clothing, making fair promises of the glorious gospel of Christ, and the liberty of the Son of God, *but inwardly* (as in Italy, Spain, or generally within your own folds) *are ravening wolves*. Or to fit you with an emblem essentially parallel to your nature and custom, ye are *λυκάνθρωποι inversi*, men abroad, and wolves at your own home. 283 For whiles you seek to convert an alien, you magnify the doctrine of the gospel, your speech is fair, your whistle pleasant, and your feeding sweet and good; if ye mention the pope's authority, it is moderately, and urged in that style, *βόσκει τὰ ἀρνία μου, Peter, Feed my lambs*^z: but when ye have once drawn these lambs within your hurdles, ye change your note, and turn into your proper shape, then you cry with ravenous mouths, *ποίμανε τὰ πρόβατά μου*; that is, as you interpret^a, *Rule my sheep*, or *Petre macta, manduca, Kill and eat*. Now all the pretended glorious promises of the gospel, or large hopes of liberty, which you had given them before, are suddenly contracted in these two main commandments, the chief supporters of your religion, on which your law and gospel hang: if any thing be proposed to be believed, believe or be burnt; if to be acted, do or die.

5. But as I was saying, such kind of weapons must be used only towards such as are admitted unto Christ's fold; unto them the pope's authority must be a rule, for they must be ruled by his iron rod. But let us suppose a Christian, (either well-minded protestant or papist,) a Jew, or Mahometan, all zealous in their kind, and of carriage moderate, should meet together: in some principles of belief they all agree; all acknowledge the Old Testament to be the word of God, but

^z John xxi. 16.

^a Baronius.

differ in the true sense and meaning of it. What means would you prescribe to win either of these two unbelievers to the truth? I am sure ye would not begin with the pope's authority. Were it not the readiest way to win a Mahometan, to shew him that the greatness of that kingdom in which he glorieth, was ordained by God to punish the Christian world, as Nebuchadnezzar's was to plague the Jews, and should decay, would Christians amend? and (the strength of his affection to the prosperity of that empire abated) to propose the carnal affection of Mahomet and his religion, most of which is loathsome to the ears of such as have any notion of any religion; whereas the purity of Christ's gospel is such as a sober mind once therewith acquainted would reverence, albeit he could not obey.

6. This or the like method is used by sundry learned papists to dissuade Mahometism. If they reply, that they first seek to make them acknowledge the scriptures, that they may thence learn to rely upon the pope's infallibility; they utterly deface their own pretended glory, in converting so many aliens unto the faith^b. For all this pains in such as follow this supposed

^b To convert Pagans to the Romanish faith as it is now taught by the Jesuits, is but to palliate infidelity with hypocrisy: as the mysteries of that religion's iniquity are but a medley or untoward confusion of Gentilism and Christianity which cannot symbolize, or rather their imperfect mixture depraveth both, so as the compound is worse than either of the ingredients taken apart: thus Ludovicus Vives complaineth upon these words of St. Augustin: (lib. 14. De Civitate Dei, cap. 18. (Usum

scortorum terrena civitas licitam turpitudinem fecit.) Concubinæ et pellices (saith Vives) non sunt prohibitæ: quemadmodum ex legibus de concubinariis ostenditur, lib. Digest. 25. Satis aperte Augustinus testatur esse jure civili vetere Romano multa permissa, quæ sunt contraria legibus divinis. Hoc isti nolunt, qui dum gentilitatem conjungere et coaptare Christianismo laborant, corrupto utroque et alterius impatiente nec gentilitatem nec Christianismum retinent.

method, is but to purchase a double portion in the Pharisees' woe, for compassing sea and land to make others of their profession. The Pharisees, in such conversions, did as it were quadrate the measure of proselytes' sin, multiplying Gentilism by Pharisaism. The Jesuits make up the full cubic, whilst they produce Mahometism, which is but a medley of Gentilism and Judaism, into Jesuitism, which is the sublimation of Pharisaism, mixed with malignant atheism.

For it is impossible that this conversion should 284 abolish the form or essential quality of the Mahometan's former carnal corrupt religion; but rather intend the bad temper of it, by superaddition of this second in quality more malignant. And yet for the effecting of this change they make Christ Jesus, their crucified Lord and God, but a stale for the advancement of his kingdom, that (by their own confession) may be for life and manners far worse than Mahomet. Suppose then a convert Mahometan should know what manner of men most of their popes be, how could he choose but either repent of his conversion or turn treacherous atheist, to outvie the Jesuit in such villainous gulleries as this, wherein he useth Mahomet's beastly life^c as an argument to dissuade his followers

^c So R. B., in his second book of Resolution, arg. 6. p. 249. objects such matters to Mahomet and his successors, as a man might justly suspect he had raked out of Platina de Vitis Pontificum. It is a pretty strain of impudency in him and his fellows, to draw such arguments from Mahomet and his successors' lewd life against Mahometans, and not admit the same as good against themselves, many of whose popes (by their own

confession) are as bad as bad may be. Albeit even unto the most abominable of them, that have been or may be, they attribute as much in matters of religion, as the Turks can to Mahomet. Sed illis æs triplex circa frontem fuit, their foreheads are fenced doubtless with a triple shield of brass, that can without blushing object intemperancy to Luther, or infamy to Calvin, (both in respect of most of their great prelates, saints for

from his religion, and yet useth the word of God, whose sanctity both acknowledge, but as a bait to bring men on to fasten their faith upon a more detestable son of perdition. This were indeed the best way to harden the Mahometan in his preposterous belief: that Mahomet (though as we object a notorious impostor) might be sent from God to win the world unto that truth by the sword, whereunto Christ could not bring it by his godly life, and most effectual kind of preaching. And I do not see what else but this or the like conclusion can with any probability be gathered from any arguments brought by the papists, to prove the necessity of the pope's or their corrupt church's infallible authority, for supplying the defect of Christ and his apostles' writings. Finally, to bring either Mahometan or pagan to acknowledge the truth of the New Testament, or Christ for their Saviour, that they might afterwards rely upon such men, is but to lead them into the entry of the kingdom of heaven, that they may finally shut the door on them when they have one foot within it; which is indeed the sole, entire, formal effect of this supposed infallible key. But my good liking of industry (though of our greatest adversary) in this slothful age makes me hope, (God grant I fail not in my hopes,) that in remote countries, whose air is not pestered with the noisome and loathsome scent of Rome their mother's whoredom, even Jesuits are inspired with more pure and hallowed cogitations; and that they use not Valentian, Bellarmine,

good life and conversation,) and urge their forged blemishes to the prejudice of reformed religion; which no way dependeth upon Luther's life, death, or doctrine, as their catholic religion doth continually upon their popes'.

If Luther's life (though we should grant it bad) might any way prejudice ours, the impiety of their popes (from whom their faith is essentially derived) must of necessity utterly disgrace their religion.

or others of their Italianated fellows' methods^d in catechizing converts; or if they do, yet God, I trust, will be merciful unto such poor souls as thus adore the pope, not knowing what manner of creature he is, but rather in charity presume him for such in the concrete as the Jesuits make him in the abstract, even a second Christ in holiness itself.

7. Were not the best method to win the Jew, to²⁸⁵ compare the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New, and experiments of God's judgments upon that nation? Some Jews have been brought unto the truth by these means^e, who have done the church of Christ excellent service in the exposition of prophecies concerning Christ, labouring to win their countrymen unto him by comparing the Old Testament with the New. If the scripture may be a rule to compose the diversity of these opinions, most repugnant amongst themselves, may it not much more be a rule to compose all controversies amongst pro-

^d By God's good providence for the poor Indians' good it was, no doubt, that the Spanish catechists did not use this which we call the Apostles' Creed, lest they might have been thence occasioned to overlash in their blasphemous encomiums of the catholic church, which is scarce mentioned in that Creed or Confession which they following Aquinas have used, as Josephus Acosta complains, l. 5. de Procuranda Ind. Salute, cap. 7. De sancta vero ecclesia articulus a vulgaribus catechistis fere omititur, causam eam opinor, quod in mysteriis fidei explicandis, non tam symboli apostolici seriem sequantur, quam usitatam istam distributionem articulorum fidei

in septem ad divinitatem pertinentes, et totidem ad humanitatem, &c.

^e Johannes Baptista was converted by this method, as he himself expressly witnesseth in his Epistle to his countrymen, whom he well hoped to win by his labours in this kind: the best use he knew of the pope's authority, was such as is incident to ordinary magistracy, (whether civil or ecclesiastic,) only to constrain the Jews to read his book (as our laws bind papists to hear sermons); and for this purpose he entreats the cardinal, unto whom he dedicates his labours, to solicit thus much at the pope's hands.

fessed Christians, who agree in far more principles of faith and rules of scripture than the former did, if Christians would be as soberly affected, and not stand upon the authorities and customs of men, the special obstacle that keeps the Jews from Christianity?

8. It is usual with your writers to argue thus: We cannot know scriptures to be the scriptures but by the authority of the church; therefore we cannot know the true sense and meaning of them, but by the infallible authority of the same^f. The antecedent of which argument, as we have partly shewed, and hereafter (God willing) shall shew to be most false; so for the argument itself I only now say, that it may be far more probably inverted upon you, thus: The Jews may come to acknowledge the New Testament for the very gospel of their Messias, and to believe in heart, and profess with their mouths the mysteries therein contained, by sober and diligent comparing them with the prophecies of the Old, without the infallible authority of your church: therefore they may know the true sense and meaning of the gospel, in all points necessary to salvation, without any such infallible authority. For it is a matter of far less difficulty, for any man of sense and reason, to deduce particular conclusions from general and evident principles, than to find out the general and fundamental principles by natural notions, or other principles; and therefore more

^f Absurdum est sane ut ecclesia auctoritatem habeat discernendi verba Dei a verbis hominum, sensum Dei ab humano sensu non habeat Canus, lib. 5. cap. 5. post medium. Quod si aliam auctoritatem præter scripturam necesse est esse infallibilem, quæ doceat id quod in fide est maximum, nempe scripturæ

ipsius doctrinam esse in universum divinam: profecto est insania (some editions have *infamia*, but falsely, as I think) non credere illam ipsam auctoritatem infallibiliter item docere, quæ sit sententia ejusmodi divinæ doctrinæ. Valentianus loco sæpius citato, paragraph. 5.

easy for any such man to resolve his conscience in particular points of faith or Christian obedience, after he hath found out the foundation of Christian faith, (to wit, Christ Jesus crucified, raised from the dead, and other general dictates of faith in the apostolical writings,) than to come unto the acknowledgment and belief of these fundamental points themselves, from the broken knowledge (such as the Jews have) of the Old Testament. And thus it evidently follows, that if the Old Testament be a rule unto the Jews for finding out the truth of the New, much more may the New, once acknowledged by them, and admitted of equal authority with the Old, be a perfect rule for them in matters of salvation. And if these scriptures are or may be a rule to the Jews, (if they will believe them,) then must they be a rule to all Christians that believe them. No Christian I hope will deny, but that the Old Testament is the rule of the Jews: for the unbelieving Jews shall be condemned, in what part of the world soever, for not following this rule which God hath commended 286 and made known unto them, not for not acknowledging the pope's infallibility, of which many of them never heard. And if the Old Testament be such to them, much more must the whole canon be unto us such a rule: and if we die in misbelief or infidelity, we shall be judged by this rule of God's law and gospel which we transgressed, not by the pope's decrees or expositions of it. That many, Christians by profession, err in points of faith, or mistake the true sense and meaning of it, or pervert it to their destruction, proceeds from their ingratitude towards God that gave it, and from their delight in falsehood. Which is the reason why these Jews mistake the true meaning of the Old Testament.

9. If any of our adversaries here demand, How

chanceth it so many Jews err in the foundation of faith, if the scripture be such an infallible rule? he must be content to resolve me in the like question; How chanceth it so many Jews live unconverted in Spain and Italy, and other places, either in the pope's dominions or where his authority is established, if the infallibility of his authority or their church be such an excellent rule? If they reply, The Jews might believe all points of Roman catholic faith aright, so they would admit their church as judge or mistress of faith; the Jews might with as good reason rejoin, So might the Romans believe all points of Judaism, would they acknowledge this supposed infallibility of doctrine to be in their rabbinical expositions, not in the pope's determinations. But the Romanist, I suppose, would desire a sign ere he believed them herein: and are we less bound by the rule of faith to desire some tolerable satisfaction to these reasons following, ere we believe them in this point, as prejudicial in our judgment to religion in general, as subscription to rabbinical doctrine is unto Christian verity.

10. The Jews admit the Old Testament's authority as undoubtedly as the Jesuits do the pope's: yet it enlightens not their hearts. What is the reason? Because that part of scripture is so obscure? So Valentian (and such as follow him) in all congruity must say, yea he hath said it, "That veil which St. Paul saith is put before the hearts of Jews, that they cannot behold the glory of the gospel, (as the apostle there argues,) is woven for the most part of the difficulties of scriptures^g." Nor do the Jews only deny the New Testament to be infallible, but bitterly inveigh against it as erroneous and contradictory to the Old. What is the cause? Is it not that which Valentian elsewhere

^g Before cited, lib. 2. cap. 13. par. 7.

assigns? “The scripture alone” (that is, in his language, without the infallible avouchment of their church) “is so far from ending all controversies of faith, that it rather occasions controversies and dissensions in doctrines of faith.” If to the Jew, through his default, the writings of Moses and the prophets be so obscure, add your infallible key to open his heart to them, or them to it. If by this obscurity they minister matter of contention, or their sense mistaken exasperate Jewish malice against Christians, interpose your human authority inspired from above, to allay the fervency of their distempered zeal.

11. You acknowledge this obscurity and other objected insufficiencies, (disenabling the scripture for ruling or judging men’s faith,) to arise from the frailty or viciousness of human nature, and hence you plead 287 your church’s infallibility as necessary and all-sufficient to supply these defects incident unto scripture, not in itself, but in respect of us. Your church’s authority, then, (at the least adjoined to scripture,) should make men (otherwise subject to the former infirmities or vicious dispositions) capable of heavenly doctrine. Tell us then distinctly, Can it or can it not make all, or most, or such as the scriptures do not, believe aright? If this it cannot do adjoined to scriptures, it is by your own objections against them, a rule as unsufficient as you would make them without it. If it can make all, or most, or such as scripture alone doth not, believe aright, this it must effect either by removing or not removing those diseases or infirmities of human nature, which scriptures without it cannot cure.

12. First, if it could remove that temper which makes the Jew a more unprofitable hearer of scripture than young gallants are of stoical moral discipline, your church is guilty of wilful malice and murder of

souls, that will not apply this infallible key, able of itself to open that veil of adamant, wherewith the Jews' hearts are so masked, that neither the light of Mosaical, prophetical, apostolical, or evangelical writings can find entrance unto them. Secondly, albeit this supposed infallible authority could remove the former veil, yet were it not in this respect to be acknowledged an infallible rule of faith, but rather an ordinary and necessary means (such as we acknowledge the lawful magistracy or ministry to be) for squaring or proportioning men's frail or exorbitant affections, the better to parallel with God's word, the most exact, inerrable, and all-sufficient rule of faith, even by your consent; were it not for this infirmity or vicious disposition of man's nature, which (as you likewise acknowledge) is the sole cause why the scriptures are obscure, and minister matter of contention.

13. But our adversaries attribute not any such virtue to their infallible rule as to make a fool wise, the lascivious chaste, the drunkard sober, a knave honest, the impudent modest, or ambitious lowly: for even the pope himself, in whose bosom this rule lodgeth, may harbour these and like vices in his breast: he may (by his own followers' confession) be as incorrigible for bad life and manners, as infallible for matters of doctrine. Seeing then their supposed rule cannot remove those impediments which detain the Jews with other infidels and heretics from the truth, can it make men believe aright whilst they remain? If it can, it is of greater force than either our Saviour's authority or skill in scriptures. Neither of which, not all his travels and best endeavours here on earth, though infinitely surpassing any pains the pope is willing to take, could instruct the Jews in the doctrine of faith, whilst their carnal affections remained in strength. *How can ye*

believe, (saith he, who spake as never man spake, and had wrought those works none other could,) which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh of God alone^h?

14. To conclude then, if the infidelity of the Jews be any just exception why scriptures cannot be the perfect rule of faith, this exception will disenable the Roman church's infallible authority for being such a rule. But if the general error of the Jews, in the very 288 main foundation of religion, be no just exception why either the scripture according to us, or the church's authority according to them, should not be the rule of faith: then cannot the errors of heretics, or variety of opinions about the sense and meaning of particular places of less moment, impeach the sufficiency of scripture for performing all that is required by either party in their supposed absolute rule. For it shall, God willing, be made evident in due place, that the selfsame affections (only different in degree, sometimes not so much) which caused the Jews' infidelity in our Saviour's time, are the only roots and fountains of heresies and dissensions throughout all ages.

15. And as elsewhere is already proved, wheresoever the habitual affection for degree and quality is, the heresy or infidelity is likewise the same, even in such as hold contrary opinions, and would perhaps maintain their contrariety unto death: for as many strongly persuaded of their belief in Christ, shall go for infidels in that last day; so may such as think themselves orthodoxes, be tainted with the contrary heresy which they impugn, if subject to the same affections which did breed it. But for us to account such as make profession of Christianity, infidels, or such as subscribe to orthodoxal doctrine, heretics, would be injurious and

^h John v. 44.

unlawful ; not because the former assertion indefinitely taken is not warrantable, but because no man can precisely discern the indentity of inward affection, save he alone that knoweth the secrets of all hearts. Thus all the blasts of vain doctrine they can oppose unto the truth we maintain, do in the issue fasten the roots of faith once rightly planted, howsoever they may shake the timorous or fainthearted Christian, or cause the weak in faith, not cleaving to scripture as their only infallible rule and sure supporter, dangerously to reel and stagger. But though they fall, yet God's word shall never fail to approve itself a most perfect rule; besides others, in these two respects : first, in that none can fail in that course which it prescribes, or fall away from faith, but by such means as the Jew hath done, the true causes of whose apostasy and incredulity it hath expressly foretold and fully registered to posterity. Secondly, because such as it doth not, no other rule, means, or authority possible, either in the earth or in the region below the earth, shall ever win to true Christian faith.

The Sufficiency of Scriptures for final Determination of Controversies in Religion, proved by our Saviour's and his Apostles' Authority and Practice.

1. NOR will they be ruled by an angel from heaven, that will not obey the live voice of the Son of God ; whose miracles, whilst he lived here on earth, joined with his doctrine, we will suppose, were of as much force (if the Jesuit will grant no more) as the pope's proposal of scriptures, to beget faith, or convince gainsayers of truth. The Jews were of diverse opinions about his doctrine : *Some said he was a good man ; others said, No, but he deceiveth the people :* he gives them a rule (as you heard before) how to discern it :

*If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine*ⁱ, &c. This contents them not, albeit he had done many and good works amongst them sufficient to have manifested his Divine authority unto such as had never heard of Moses or a Messias to come: nay, they go about to kill him for those works which bare testimony of his worth, and as they thought, had warrant of scripture for so doing, because he did them on the sabbath day. Here Christ is of one opinion, the Jews of another concerning the sense of scripture: who shall judge? or by what rule must their contrary doctrine be tried? By Christ's infallible authority? They admit it not. By extraordinary and miraculous works? They persecute him for his miracles already wrought for their people's good. Doth Christ here leave them, because destitute of a rule to recall them? If he had none, how shall the pope (by his own challenge but his vicar) have any to convince his adversaries? If Christ submit his Divine doctrine to any other rule, how dare the pope deny submission of his to the same? What rule then was left? Only the scripture, which both did acknowledge. They pretend Moses' law concerning sabbath breach why he should die: unto their false interpretation of this, our Saviour opposed the true meaning of another Mosaical scripture. Moses forbad murder as well as sabbath day breaking; and yet they seek to kill Christ, only for healing a man upon the sabbath day: so forgetful are they of the one, and so partially addicted to the other. But how shall they know that to make a man whole upon the sabbath was not to break it, and violate Moses' law? This our Saviour makes evident unto them by exposition of that law; and their own custom, which continued from the first promulgation, was a

ⁱ John vii. 12. 17.

good interpretation of it. *Moses*, saith our Saviour, *gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, be ye angry with me, because I have made a man every whit whole upon the sabbath day? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment*^j. Thus was scripture applied to their conscience, the last and final rule by which they stand or fall: and is always a light either bringing men to see
 290 their own salvation, or putting out their wonted sight, in token of their condemnation to utter darkness. And Christ's last words in that controversy, *Judge not according to the appearance*, are likewise a written rule of scripture^k; so absolute a rule is this sacred word of God, (by our Saviour's consent and practice,) both to inform the understanding, and to moderate affection which makes us blind.

2. The same method our Saviour useth in a like dispute, with the last clause whereof if we compare the Romanists' doctrine in this controversy, it may appear in some sort the same: theirs is our Saviour's indeed, but quite inverted, truly Antichristian. They teach we cannot know Mosaical or other scriptures, but by the pope's infallible proposal: the great infallible Teacher tells the Jews, they could not believe him or know his doctrine, though proposed by him mouth to mouth, because they had not believed Moses' writings; *If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words*^l? Yet Christ's words registered by his apostles and evangelists, must be at the least of like force and use to us, as Mosaical writings were then to the Jews.

^j John vii. 22.^k Deut. i. 16, 17.^l John v. 47.

Our conclusion therefore is invincible: If Moses' doctrine alone were a rule to try Christ's controversies with the Jews, then must it and Christ conjoined be the rule whereby all Christians' controversies must be tried. From the opportunity of this place, the judicious reader, though not admonished, would observe, that our adversaries, unless possessed with Jewish phrensy or fantastic madness, (diseases causing men usually misdeem other for such as they most are, but least think themselves,) could not possibly account it a part of folly in us, to make the written word^m sole umpire in all controversies of religion, though not impossible to be thus perverted by these Jews, or others of Jewish disposition, as are all heretics more or less. For we will give their imaginations a year's respite to rove about, upon condition they will then return an answer, what rule, either written or unwritten, can possibly be imagined, which would not be perverted; what authority, either living or dead, which would not be either disclaimed, abused, or contemned by men so minded as these Jews, who in the live presence of the Son of God, *the heir of all things, by whom the world was made*, and must be judged, thus sought to patronage the murder of his royal Person by the authority of his Father's word, unto whose sense they thought themselves as strictly tied, as any papist to the council of Trent? The heretics with whom St. Augustineⁿ

^m Qui fieri potest, ut quæ doctrina tam facile ab hominibus adulteratur ut in patrocinium omnium errorum advocetur, eadem sit accommodatissima, appositissimaque regula ad rejiciendum omnes omnino errores: non magis hoc certe stare potest quam si quis diceret, illud esse accommodatissimum remedium

ad recte videndum, ex quo accideret omnes cæcutire quicumque fierent cæci. Valentian loco sæpius citat paragr. 6.

ⁿ Non est mirum si Pelagiani dicta nostra in sensus quos volunt detorquere conantur: quando de scripturis sanctis, non ubi obscure aliquid dictum est, sed ubi clara et aperta sunt testimo-

had to deal, strangely wrested his words against a plain and natural meaning. Though so they had done the bishop's of Rome, or any other's then living, not disdaining to call God his Lord, their practice had not seemed strange to this reverend father; for he knew the servant was not above his master, and therefore could not expect his or any man's should be free from any such wrong or violence which he saw offered to God's word.

- 291 3. Our Saviour in the forecited controversies saw well how earnestly the Jews were set to pervert scriptures for their purpose, how glad to find any pretence out of them either to justify their dislike of his doctrine, or wreak their malice upon his person. Reason he had as great to distaste their practice herein, as the pope himself can have to inveigh against heretics for the like. Neither is there any person now living, against whom any intention of harm can be more heinous than the intention of murder against him, nor any sort of men, (unless the Jesuits, Spanish inquisitors, or such as they suborn,) so cruelly bent as these Jews were, to seek blood under a show of love to pure immaculate religion. Yet doth not our Saviour accuse the scriptures (though capable of so grievous and dangerous misconstruction) of obscurity or difficulty, or of being any

nia, id facere consueverunt, more quidem hæreticorum etiam cæterorum, Augustin. li. 2. de Nupt. et Concupisc. cap. 31. This was the place, which Valentian, (as was noted in the nineteenth chapter of this book,) to prove the insufficiency of scriptures for composing controversies, would have observed. The reader, I doubt not, will note his shame or folly, or both, that either could not, or would not,

see how easily these men would have wrested the Trent-council, or any other rule they can imagine. For restraining such evident perverseness we acknowledge the necessity of a lawful magistracy, whose usefulness in this or like doth no way argue an absolute infallibility in determining all cases of controversies.

way the occasion of Jewish heresy, or his persecution thence caused : nor doth he dissuade those very men, which had thence sucked this poisonous doctrine, much less others, from reading, but exhorts them in truth and deed, not in word and fancy only, to rely on scriptures as the rule of salvation. *Search the scriptures, for in them ye think* (and that rightly) *to have eternal life*, John v. 39. Not intimating the least necessity of any external authority infallibly to direct them, he plainly teacheth it was the internal distorture of their proud affections which had disproportioned their minds to this straight rule, and disenabled them for attaining true belief, which never can be rightly raised but by this square and line.

4. It was not then the reading of scriptures which caused them mistake their meaning and persecute him, but the not reading of them as they should. Err they did, *not knowing the scriptures* ; and know them they did not, because they did not read them thoroughly, sincerely searching out their inward meaning. And thus to read them afresh, as our Saviour prescribed them, (laying aside ambitious desires,) was the only remedy for to cure that distemper which they had incurred by reading them amiss. It were a mad kind of counsel (better befitting a witch or cunning woman, than a wise man) to dissuade one from using medicines prescribed him by men of skill, because he had incurred some dangerous disease, by taking the like out of his own humour, or in a fancy either without or contrary to the prescript of professed physicians ; yet such and no better our adversaries' advice heretofore hath been: and the strength of all their arguments in the point now in hand to this day continues this: We must not make scriptures the rule of faith, because many heresies have sprung thence, and great dissen-

sions grown in the church, whiles one follows one sense, and another the contrary. Whereas in truth, the only antidote against contentions, schisms, and heresies, is to read them attentively, and with such preparation as they prescribe; as, not to be *desirous of vainglory, not to provoke or envy one another*^o: *to lay aside all maliciousness, guile, dissimulation, and evil speaking, like newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the word, whereby we must grow*^p, *not fashioning ourselves according to this present world*^q, &c.

5. These were delivered as sovereign remedies against all epidemical diseases of the soul by physicians, as both acknowledge, most infallible. For bet-
 292 ter unfolding, and more seasonable applying of these and infinite other like aphorisms of life, we admit variety of commentators: but are as far from suffering any, of whose spirit we have no proof, (especially any not ready to submit the trial of his receipts unto these sacred principles and experiments answerable to them,) to try what conclusions he list upon our souls, as the pope would be from taking what potions soever any English empiric should prescribe, though disclaiming all examinations of his prescripts by Galen, Hippocrates, Paracelsus, or any other ancient or modern well esteemed physician's rules.

6. If since this late invention of the pope's infallibility, our adversaries do not now, as heretofore, condemn all reading scriptures simply, what marvel?
 r For as Satan, after once God had spoken to the world by his Son, began to change his old note, and sought to imitate the gospel style, by writing his heresies as God did his new covenants in men's hearts; so in later ages, since the Almighty gave his word in every lan-

And good reason the poorest creature living should tender the eternal welfare of his soul as much as the pope doth the transitory health of his body.

^o Gal. v. 26. ^p 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. ^q Rom. xii. 2. ^r Vide lib. 1. cap. 10. par. 2.

guage, and the number of preachers hath been greatly multiplied, the old serpent permits the Jesuits and his other instruments to translate, expound, and preach the gospel to the ignorant. And in opposition to the practice of reformed churches, the lay Roman catholic may now behold, yea read the words of life. What difference then can any make betwixt theirs and our doctrine in this point? such as in times past was betwixt true miracles wrought by the finger of God, and diabolical wonderments, all which latter were usually wrought to idle purposes, and by some apish trick or other bewrayed their authors' sinister intendments: so doth the cunning restraint of this liberty late granted to the Roman laics great in show, bewray who was the author of this plot, and what his purpose^s. Some merry devil sure is minded to make hell sport, by putting this gull upon the learned papist, his instrument to put the like upon the ignorant; who now at length may read the scriptures, but with absolute submission of their interpretation to his instructors, who may not take any receipt thence, but according to their supreme infallible physician's prescripts, which may not be examined by any rule of God's written or unwritten word:

^s The pope's drift in permitting his laity to look into the holy scriptures and behold the majesty of God speaking in them, (a matter heretofore held as dangerous for them as for the Israelites in times past to have approached to the holy mount,) is just like the Devil's in carrying our Saviour into a high mountain to shew him all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them. The condition annexed to the pope's donative is the selfsame with that the Devil added to his proffer, *All these will I give unto*

thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. For none may enjoy scriptures but with humble acknowledgment of absolute homage unto the pope as the sole and supreme judge of all controversies concerning them: from whom all right unto the means of their salvation must be derived. Which kind of worship is altogether derogatory to God's glory, as that which Satan demanded of our Saviour, or any other idolatry that is or hath been, as shall (God willing) hereafter appear.

nor may any man call his skill in question, much less condemn him of imposture, by the lamentable issue and dismal success of his practices. Should men upon like terms be admitted to read Galen or Hippocrates, and yet the monopoly of medicines permitted to some one empiric or apothecary, not liable to any account, whether his confections were made according to the rules of physic-art or no: they might be in greater danger of poisoning, than if these grand physicians had never written: for that might be prescribed them by such an authentic mountebank, as a cordial, which the other had detected for poison. So should the Christian world, might the Jesuits' plea prevail, be continually at the pope's courtesy, whether they should embrace that sense of scriptures which Christ and his apostles have condemned for the doctrine of devils, as the oracles of the living God, and food for their souls.

- 293 7. But some man more indifferent would here perhaps interpose; Though theirs be bad, do you prescribe us any better method of health? Your former counsel to practise the apostles' rules, is as if a man should say to one sick of a dangerous disease, Expel the bad humour, and you shall be well. Yet as we said before, *Est pars sanitatis velle sanari*, to desire the extirpation of such affections as hinder our proficiency in the school of Christ, or knowledge of his precepts, is a good step to health. The scriptures are the words of life containing medicines as well as meat, and must purge our souls of carnal affections, as physic doth the body of bad humours: they teach withal what abstinence must be used ere we can be capable of that spiritual welfare, which they promise to the soul of such as follow their prescriptions. And because our natural corruption cannot be assuaged, much less expelled, but by their force or virtue, which is not always mani-

fested upon the first receipt; we are to come unto them with such reverence, as the moralist did to meditations of virtue, *vacua et sobria mente*, in sobriety of spirit, not in the heat, abundance, or actual motion of such affections as hinder their operation upon our souls; as men usually take physic upon a fasting and quiet stomach, although pestered with bad humours, which yet cannot be extirpate but by physic; nor by physic, if ministered in the actual motion, heat, or raging of such humours. If a man have but this desire to be rid of such affections as breed this distemper in his soul, or work a distaste of the word of life, he is capable of that promise, *Habenti dabitur*, and shall in good time see his desire augmented, whose increase will bring forth greater fervency in prayer; and prayers, if fervent, though in men subject to such infirmities, avail much, and shall in the end be heard to the full. And, as well in thankful duty to the Redeemer of mankind for his gracious promises, as in hope of being further partakers of the blessings promised; every one that heareth God's word ought, and such as hear it aright will, as oft as they seek recovery of their spiritual health by it, or such means as it prescribes, abstain from all occasions and occurrents that may increase, provoke, or strengthen such affections as hinder the operations of it upon their souls. For even nature taught the cynic to account surfeiting and intemperate diet madness in the heathen, whiles they sacrificed for health^t. If any have erred in hearing God's word amiss, or in the unseasonable applying of sacred precepts: these errors must be recalled by further consultation with their dispensors, by more diligent search

^t Poscis opem nervis, corpus- crassa Annuere his superos ve-
que fidele senectæ: Esto; age. tuere: Jovemque morantur.—
Sed grandes patinæ, tucetaque Persius Sat. 2. [41.]

and better instruction in other parts of this method of life.

8. St. Peter knew many ignorant and unstable souls had perverted some hard places of St. Paul's Epistles, *as they had other scriptures, to their own destruction*. Did he therefore advise them to whom he thus wrote, not to seek their salvation out of St. Paul's Epistles, but with absolute submission of their judgment, to his and his successors' prescripts? or doth he not seek to establish them in that doctrine which St. Paul had taught, *according to the wisdom given him, in all his epistles*. Or can any endued with reason doubt, whether St. Paul himself did not expect his writings should be a rule of faith to all that read them, without continuance either of his own or others' actual infallible proposal of them?

294 He had protested once for all, *Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you otherwise than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*. He had said before, and yet saith he now again, *If any man preach unto you otherwise than ye have received, let him be accursed*^u. For he had taught them, as their own conscience might witness, the doctrine of God and not man, as he intimateth in the next words.

9. Either St. Paul is not authentic in this protestation, or else all stand accursed by it, that dare abso-

^u Gal. i. 8. From this place Valentian, after his wonted manner, would force an argument to prove the necessity of a perpetual infallible authority to denounce *viva voce* the like anathemas against heretics. Whereas St. Paul's words, if we consider all circumstances, do exclude any such infallible authority or judge of his meaning, or other scripture, by which he supposed all other doctrines should be examined. And as a learned papist

well observes upon these words of St. Paul to Timothy, *The scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation*, (2 Tim. iii. 15.) the scriptures which he had learned (to wit, the Old Testament) might perform the same to him in his absence, which St. Paul had done in his presence; as he saith, *sine schola Simonis*, as we may add, *sine schola papæ*, without the pope's cursing or blessing. Vide Sabout in 2 ad Timoth. cap. 3.

lutely admit any doctrine, though from an angel's mouth, but upon due examination and sure trial, whether consonant or contrary to what St. Paul hath left in writing. His meaning notwithstanding in many places, as his fellow-apostle witnesseth, was much perverted. And seeing what was past could not be amended, it seemed necessary to St. Peter to admonish others, lest they should be entangled in like error. But what means had he left to prevent this perverting of scriptures in them? Either none besides, or none so good, as diligent reading or hearing the written word: for such was this Epistle, which for their admonition he now wrote, and was desirous, questionless, all of them should with attention hear or read, lest they also might be *plucked away with the error of the wicked, and fall from their wonted steadfastness*, from which others had already fallen. For what reason? Because they were unlearned. Unlearned? In what faculty? In the scriptures, no doubt. For St. Peter himself was learned only in them, and would not vouchsafe the secular arts of that time (standing in opposition unto the gospel) this glorious title of *learning*. And is want of learning and knowledge in scriptures the cause of falling from faith and former steadfastness?

And yet must men abstain from reading them, because they are obscure to such blinded guides, or may minister matter of contention to contentious spirits, or occasion of error to the perverse? Must we be ignorant in them, and expert in other means of faith, because ignorance and want of learning in them causeth errors in faith, and what other means soever of men's salvation? *Quis fuor hic* (shall I say) *ne moriari, mori*; or rather, *ne possis ægrotare, perire*? Must we abstain from spiritual food, and so inevitably starve, because some others by unreasonable or intemperate

That there is no danger can come by reading scriptures, for which the scriptures have not present remedy.

taking of it have incurred—what? diseases indeed very grievous; yet such as might easily have been cured or prevented, had the diseased been more accustomed to feed upon those plain and easy prescripts usual in the latter parts of St. Paul's Epistles, as, (for example,) amongst others, upon that most general: *Through the grace of God that is given unto me, I say to every one that is among you, that no man presume to understand above that which is meet to understand; but that he understand according to sobriety, as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith^a.*

295 10. From careful and assiduous attention unto this and other like elementary precepts, those unlearned but presumptuous readers of St. Paul's Epistles might quickly have grown so wise and well learned in scriptures, as not to have meddled with these *δυσνόητα* so soon, at least not so much; rather contenting themselves, while such they were, *like newborn babes* with his *milk*, as much better for their weak digestion, than his *strong meat*; so the same apostle had elsewhere expressly written for their instruction, had they not presumed to know *above that which was written*. Erred they had then from the truth, and fallen away from their former steadfastness, not so much by following the hard and difficult, as by not following the plain and easy places of St. Paul, able to have conducted them from knowledge to knowledge, whose mature fulness (could they with patience have expected it) might in good time have overgrown the former difficulties.

Instances enough have been, more might be brought, to evince the general conclusion intimated in the state of the question before proposed. There is no occasion or temptation which may move men to obstinate mistaking or perverting scriptures to abet contentions, but

^a Rom. xii. 3.

the scriptures one where or other have a remedy as easy as sovereign prescribed against it, so men would be diligent to seek, or resolute to apply it found, in their practice or course of life. If some spiders from the forementioned, or like difficult places, have sucked poison, yet other parts of the same canon teach us to lay aside the spider's temperature, even *all maliciousness*^y, *all envy*^z, *all indignation or contention*^a. Though sundry as subtle as serpents have been mistaken in the interpretation of some, or have inverted others, yet some third place teacheth us to join the dove's innocency to the serpent's subtilty; and unto both adding the bee's industry, these very places, whence others suck poison, shall afford us honey. For the word of God is in itself, and unto us, (if we be not spiders to ourselves,) *sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb*^b.

CHAP. XXIV.

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That all their Objections, drawn from Dissensions amongst the Learned, or the Uncertainty of private Spirits, either conclude nothing of what they intend against us, or else more than they mean, or (at the least) dare avouch, against God's Prophets and faithful People of old.

1. IT is a sure argument, the truth on our part is exceeding great, in that all objections, hitherto brought by our adversaries, (as it usually falleth out in men more eagerly set to offend others than defend themselves, though otherwise unequally matched,) conclude, *aut nihil, aut nimium*, "either nothing, or too much," or all for us against the objectors. But especially whilst they seek to dissuade the sufficiency of our supposed rule, by dissensions thence occasioned amongst the learned, or such as should be guides of others; as their proofs are curtailed, and will not touch the points

^y 1 Pet. ii. 1. ^z Gal. v. 26. ^a James iii. 16. iv. 5. ^b Ps. xix. 10.

Wherein
our adver-
saries'
proofs come
short of
what they
aim at.

they aim at, so the conclusion which they would shuffle in, not inferred from the premises, is above measure over-lashing. First, they fail, in avouching that indefinitely of all, which is true only of some parts of scriptures. For many are so perspicuous and plain, as they minister no matter of contention, no, not to the most contentious spirits professing our or their religion. These, well learned and laid up in men's hearts, engaged in other particular controversies, would be an excellent light to many other places, which for want of this method to most of both sides either seem obscure, or of the same suit their several dispositions are. But to omit particular causes of heresies, or heretics' perverting scriptures, (elsewhere to be prosecuted,) the most general and primary is the quite contrary to that which our adversaries assign.

2. They except against scripture, and say it cannot be the rule of faith, nor ought to be so taken of all Christians, because it is so obscure, and apt to breed contentions among such as rely upon it. We have sufficiently proved that all obscurities, all contentions, about the sense of scriptures in points of moment, arise hence; because we do not admit of it for our only rule; all affection to men's persons, state, or dignity, all private quarrels laid apart^c. If the Jesuit could prove it should either continue obscure in points of faith, or

^c Partiality either unto our own or others' opinion, is the only cause of contention amongst men, and dissension from the truth, even amongst such as acknowledge the scriptures for their rule of faith: for it is one thing to say they make it, another indeed to make it or use it as the rule of faith, in their practice or course of life. Whence

our adversaries' objections drawn from contentions amongst reformed churches are easily answered. For these are not occasioned by relying upon the scripture, but because sundry in reformed churches do, in deed, as the papists both in deed and word, disclaim it for the rule of faith.

minister matter of contention to such as conform their lives to the elementary rules or easy precepts therein contained; their arguments were to some purpose. But while this they neither can, nor go about to prove, they shall only prove themselves ridiculous atheists, albeit we grant them all they desire, about the variety of opinions (even in places of greatest moment) among the learned. For whatsoever they can object to us, either concerning the variety of opinions amongst the learned, or such distraction as might follow thereon in 297 the simple and illiterate, will conclude as much, both against that certainty the ancient prophets themselves had of their own visions, and the steadfastness of that belief which the faithful amongst God's people gave unto their predictions or prophecies. First, it is evident from the story of Ahab, that lying spirits did counterfeit visions then, as the spirit of error doth now the spirit of truth; so as the false prophets had strange delusions and appearances, as well as the true their Divine illuminations; whence the contention amongst the professed prophets themselves was as great as any now amongst the learned interpreters of prophecies or other scriptures. And from this contention amongst the prophets, the unlearned, or rather all in that people not prophets, were, by the Romanists' objections against us, (were they pertinent,) to waver and halt between the contrariety of illuminations and visions, professed as well by the false prophets as the true.

^d Nor will any Jesuit, I think, be so bold as to deny,

^d These seducing spirits' hopes were not so desperate as to make them leave their wonted trade, even in St. Cyprian's time. Spiritus insincerī et vagi, qui postea quam terrenis vitiis immersi sunt, et a vigore cœlesti terreno con-

tagio recesserunt, non desinunt perditī perdere, et depravati errorem pravitatis infundere. Hos et poetæ dæmonas vocant, et Socrates instrui se et regi ad arbitrium dæmonis prædicabat—. Hi ergo spiritus sub statuis at-

(lest every man might perceive him to deny more than possibly he could know,) that those lying spirits in the mouths of Ahab's prophets, were then as cunning in imitating true revelations, as now in counterfeiting orthodoxal interpretations of truth revealed. Or if this they call in question, let them resolve us why idolatry in those ages, wherein true prophets flourished most, should be as frequent and various, as heresies in later times, wherein the preaching of the gospel is most plentiful. The true reason whereof, as we suppose, is this: These lying spirits were alike apt to imitate God's several manner of speaking (whether by means ordinary or extraordinary) in diverse ages. At all times, if we compare either their native capacity or acquired skill with our own, though in matters wherein we have been most conversant; if to their sagacity we add their malicious temper, and eager desires of doing ill, which always add an edge unto wit in mischievous invention; in all these they so far exceed the sons of seduced Adam, that unless the Almighty did either assist us by his Holy Spirit, or restrain them in the exercise of their skill, (especially in spiritual matters, wherewith the natural man hath no acquaintance,) who could, in any age, be able to discern their

que imaginibus consecratis delitescunt. Hi adflatu suo vatam pectora inspirant, extorum fibras animant, avium volatus gubernant, sortes regunt, oracula efficiunt, falsa veris semper involvunt: nam et falluntur et fallunt, vitam turbant, somnos inquietant. Cyprian. quod idola dii non sunt. Thus he spake of his own experience, as he adds: Nec aliud his studium est, quam a Deo homines avocare, et ad superstitionem sui ab intellectu

veræ religionis avertere: et cum sint ipsi pœnales, quærere sibi ad pœnam comites, quos ad crimen suum fecerint errore participes. Hi tamen adjurati per Deum verum a nobis, statim cedunt, et fatentur, et de obsessis corporibus exire coguntur. These were the effects of Christ's triumph over Satan, sure pledges that *the strong man was now cast out*. And the like power had not been so manifest before among the sons of men.

juggling, much less to avoid their snares, always suited to the present season? Notwithstanding most evident it is, that in Ahab's, as in all other times, tainted with the like or equivalent sins, the Almighty gives them leave to do their worst; to practise with such cunning in every kind, as leaves men, so disposed as these false prophets were, (until they amend,) no more possibility of distinguishing devilish suggestions from Divine oracles, than Ahab had (without repentance) to escape his doom, read by Elias and Micaiah. For he had not fallen, unless his prophets had been first seduced; their error therefore was by God's just judgment as fatal as his fall, both absolutely inevitable, upon supposition of their obstinate disobedience to the undoubted mandates²⁹⁸ of God's written law. Thus no one tittle of our adversaries' objections, (how the learned should be sure of their interpretations, when others as learned as they are as strongly persuaded to the contrary,) but is as directly opposite unto the certainty of true prophets' revelations; seeing many, yea most of that profession, and (in the judgment of man) men of better gifts and places than such as proved true prophets, were otherwise persuaded; usually such as the people esteemed best, strangeliest deluded.

3. That from this variety of opinions amongst the prophets about their illuminations, others not endued with the gift of prophecy were in the selfsame case, the unlearned people throughout the Christian world are in, wheresoever or whensoever dissensions arise amongst the learned, admits no question but amongst wranglers. For albeit the excellent brightness of Divine truth did necessarily imprint an infallible evidence in their apprehension, to whom it was immediately by means extraordinary revealed; yet could they not communicate this evidence or certainty unto the people, but by

preaching the word revealed, after the selfsame manner we do. Yea, sometime it was only communicated unto them by the ministry of others^e, no prophets. Here let any Jesuit, or other patron of the Romish church's cause, answer me to these demands. First, whether the people were not bound to believe the true prophecies (either delivered by the prophets' own mouths, or read by others, or directed to them in writing) to be the word of God ; and to reject the contrary doctrine of false prophets as delusions? Secondly, whether, if the ordinary people of those times could by any, Christians, though private men in later, may not by the same means, distinguish the word of God (being in like sort read, or expounded, or preached unto them) from the word of man? The word remains still the same ; the truth of it better confirmed unto the world, by the continuance of it in power and strength throughout all ages intermediate, wherein God's Spirit (by which it was first manifested to the prophets, and written in the people's hearts) hath been more plentiful than before, especially since the revelation of the gospel ; most plentiful in this present, (if I may so speak,) the second time of grace. Our argument then stands good, (*a fortiori*,) If every private man amongst God's people of old might and ought believe, and believing obey, his word revealed to others, only read or expounded unto him, rejecting all contrary or erroneous doctrines ; the people of this age must do the like : and all objections possible against the judgment of modern private spirits, conclude as much

^e Jer. xxxvi. 5, 6. And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am shut up, and cannot go unto the house of the Lord : therefore go thou, and read the roll, wherein thou hast written at my

mouth the words of the Lord, in the audience of the people in the Lord's house upon the fasting day : also thou shalt read them in the hearing of all Judah that come out of their cities.

against all private persons of ancient times: for their means of knowing the prophets' illuminations or visions were ordinary, such as we have now, liable to all exceptions that can be made against our knowledge or persuasion of the true sense of scripture; but neither theirs nor our imbecility in knowing, or facility of erring, was or is any just exception why the scripture should not be a rule to both. Albeit all the papists' arguments might be urged with far greater probability against them who were to believe prophetic writings first. For more easy it is to assent unto particulars contained in a general canon already established by the approbation of former ages, and confirmed by joint 299 consent of parties most adverse and contrary in the interpretation of several parcels; than to admit the general canon itself for the undoubted word of God, or yield obedience to the particulars therein contained. Yet were the ancient people bound to admit the prophecy of Isaiah, Jeremiah, as the undoubted word of God; albeit unknown to their ancestors, but only in the generality of Moses' doctrine: much more (as we conclude) may Christians now living assent unto the true expositions or particular contents of these prophecies, or other scriptures; of whose absolute truth in general they do not doubt, and of whose particulars they may now behold the sundry opinions and expositions of diverse ages.

4. To press the former arguments, more fully paralleled to our present controversy, a little further: I would demand of any Jesuit, whether the word of God taught by the prophets, (who were to win credit by their skill, not presumed skilful for their authority in the church, or credit in commonweal,) or the definitive sentence of the high priests, or others in eminent place, were to be the rule of Israel's faith? Whether the

people's distraction in following some one false prophet, some another, fewest of all the true prophets, most their high priests and men in authority ; might exempt any from acknowledgment of such prophecies as in the issue proved Divine, for the rule of their belief ? If that people, either upon the variety of opinions, or the authority of the priests or others, might reject the word of God, either preached unto them by the prophets, or read by others ; or appeal from it to any visible company of men, on whose decrees they might safely rely : then may the Romanists with some probability teach men to rely upon the decrees of their church for their infallible rule, not upon scriptures only. But if the people of those times were bound to rely upon Moses' law and the prophets' writings, against all the world besides, albeit jointly conspiring to teach them otherwise, though with glosses and pretences of Moses' authority ; then much more must these writings be of like authority unto us. And all the mimical objections which the Jesuits can frame to this or like purpose—If the scripture be the rule of faith, and must be discerned by private spirits, how comes it to pass that Calvin expounds it one way, Luther another, Zuinglius a third, and yet all think they have the Spirit ? —are the very same in effect with the false prophet Zedekiah's exception against Micaiah ; *When went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee*^f ?

5. Zedekiah had four hundred more of his opinion ; and this people had been very dull, if, conscious of their own factious greatness, they could not have pleaded all the papists' arguments against Micaiah ; all that can be drawn from the universality or authority of the church ; all which have mere ignorance or incogitancy of a Divine providence for their root, but branch themselves in

^f 1 Kings xxii. 24.

their after-growth into positive atheism and contradictory infidelity. First, their authors (the priests and Jesuits) *err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God*, able to lead men unto life, by this written way, though narrow and private, yet straight and plain: afterwards (as if they were Satan's sworn takers, or authorized purveyors to furnish hell with guests) observing some who rather idly wish, or loosely prof- 300
fer, than seriously purpose or earnestly strive, *to enter in at the straight gate*, either fail in their first adventures, or finally miscarry; they watch hence all opportunities of hailing passengers to their broad beaten, catholic way, which almost all heretofore have gone, as they brag, wherein a blind man, so he will follow his guide, cannot easily trip; so I think, until both come at the very pit brink of destruction, whereunto it tends directly and infallibly. But is this your catholic way more plain or better beaten than rebellious Israel's or Judah's was? Could not these also (whilst backed by their blinded guides) have mocked at private spirits, and bestowed titles upon God's true servants (because in number fewest and most opposite to their prelates) as foul and odious, as sectaries, schismatics, or heretics? Or did these willingly and wittingly go astray, as knowing their ways to be the ways of death? *Therefore my people is gone into captivity*, (saith the Lord,) *because they had no knowledge*^g. Ignorance, the nurse of your devotion, was the true mother of their superstition and idolatry: yet was this want of knowledge, which thus proved the fertile seed of all their ensuing misery, the native fruit of their former negligence in not practising the known precepts of Moses' law. And because increase of ignorance in God's word did breed in them a greater delight of hearing lies, and pleasant

^g Isaiah v. 13.

things, than the truth, he gave them their lust, as he had done their forefathers quails, in his displeasure. *Son of man*, (saith the Lord unto his prophet^h,) *these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I being required answer them? Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all departed from me through their idols.*

6. This evidently proves, that unless the moral law be duly practised, and those stumblingblocks which the wicked set before their faces removed; to seek after such a facile, inerrable rule as the papists have framed for direction in points of faith, is to solicit a snare for their own souls, as no doubt God gave the Romans, for their distaste of his word, and that longing after Gentilism before mentionedⁱ, this broken reed, whereon to this day they rely, as he had done the Israelites a king in his wrath. And though in every age, since the Goths and Vandals overran the empire, God hath raised up some poor Michaiah to withstand their state prelates; yet those lying spirits, which possessed Ahab's prophets, have ever borne greatest sway in that church, seducing princes and people, as they had done Ahab, by multitude of voices, to their own destruction. That the Romanists can produce men of great fame and note through many generations, for their defence in some
301 one point or other, it skills not much. For as God, in times past^k, suffered prophets or dreamers to

^h Ezek. xiv. 3—5.

ⁱ Cap. 19.

^k This law of Deuteronomy holds true in proportion through-

take opportunity from their strange predictions of enticing his people to idolatry, forbidden by his written law; so in every age, his providence permits men of excellent gifts and great skill in scriptures to have, yea, to seek to establish their plausible errors under pretences of revelations, secret assistances, or abundant measure of his Spirit; that by this means he may try our fidelity in searching scriptures and diligence in trying spirits, as he did the Israelites by such presumptions of Divine prophecies or visions. And if amongst this great variety of opinions I might deliver mine, as freely as I willingly submit it to each sober prophet's censure, (much more to the correction of my lawful superiors,) I should (for aught I yet see to the contrary) avouch, first, that no Christian in any age but is oft put upon his trial, whether he love God or the great ones of this world more? whether he will confess or deny Christ before men? Secondly, that during these days of peace and security which we now enjoy, our acquittal or condemnation in both the two former main interrogatories stands especially upon our abandoning or abetting their errors, in some points of danger, whose worth in others we justly admire. So much addicted are we, for the most part, to such men's persons as have been God's instruments for our good, that upon often experience of those wholesome medicines wherewith their shops are plentifully furnished, we swallow down whatsoever there we find; whereas

out all ages: *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and give thee a sign or wonder, and the sign and the wonder which he hath told thee come to pass, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;*

thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, Deut. xiii. 1—3.

perhaps the disease they had to deal with, or some other circumstances of the time, were such as required an extraordinary medicine, which whilst we administer without mixture of like ingredients, or not upon the same occasions, we may chance to poison both ourselves and our patients. Others of us again are so much accustomed to politic observation, that we commonly make no other trial of Divine truths, than by some such forensical form of proceeding as is used in secular inquisitions, wherein determinations go by calculation of most voices. But unless the Lord did suffer us to have plausible shows and goodly inducements in the world's sight for believing that which is contrary unto truth, our faith should not be sincere, nor as an armour of proof to resist all temptations; seeing there is no man almost but is apt by nature to follow a multitude to do that which public laws have judged evil, much more to think or believe as most men or men most esteemed do. On the contrary, if we look into our calling, *not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble are chosen of God*¹. Such as are his, ought to be like him in this, that they see not as men (not as natural men, be they never so many) see, nor judge not as they judge.

7. The stay whereupon they, as in all other difficulties, so especially in this trial of spirits, must rely, is his providence; which in time will bring the truth to light, and daily diffuseth the odour of life, able (were not our senses dull, or prepossessed with the fragrant smell of earthly pleasures) to lead us to that invisible truth which in this life we must follow, not by view, but by faith. Yet not by faith, if we take the Jesuits for our guides, who in this present

¹ 1 Cor. i. 26.

controversy play false huntsmen, always seeking to bring us from the prints of God's providence unto the paths and footsteps of men that have corrupted their ways; casting the form of secular proceeding before our eyes, so to withdraw us from following him who hath sweetened the air wherein we breathe with the ³⁰² words of eternal life. If men would be so mad as to frame their lives according to their doctrine, hell itself could not wish a more devilish means to make men Christians in conceit and atheists or infidels in heart. And yet besides the impiety of all other kinds of heresies or infidelities that are or have been, this of theirs is the most palpably absurd, and most contradictory to the rules of reason and principles of arts received by all. For if the arguments they bring against us conclude anything at all, they conclude as much against all certainty of secular or natural sciences.

8. And because (whether purposely, or as mere instruments managed by Satan, to what use they know not) they still labour to make civil modesty but a mask for infidelity; rightly judging (though to a wrong end) ingenuous humility and men's lowly conceits of their own worth the fittest disposition whence utter distrust of God's favour towards such poor creatures, as men so minded deem themselves, can be wrought; and if once wrought and deeply planted in soft minds or humble hearts, the only sure foundation whence they can hope to raise their blind implicit faith; it shall not be amiss, whilst we prosecute the second branch of their immoderate folly, last mentioned, to discover withal, and partly dissolve, the snares which they have set for the simple and ingenuous.

CHAP. XXV.

How far, upon what Terms and Grounds, we may with Modesty dissent from the Ancient, or others of more excellent Gifts than ourselves: that our Adversaries' Arguments impeach as much the Certainty of human Sciences as of private Spirits.

1. LET it be granted, that many places of great moment are diversely expounded by learned men; what will hence follow? that not the greatest scholars in reformed churches can be as sure of their true sense and meaning as the pope? Not, unless you first can make it evident that learning or subtilty of wit is the only means whereby the true sense of scriptures can be found out. And this being proved, you must assure us that the pope is always better learned than others, otherwise he may fail as well as they. Or if you admit not learning for the only means of distinguishing doctrines, as indeed it is not, yet must you secure the world that the pope hath all those other good qualifications, whose want caused the learned to err. Or if you require neither one nor other of these, you must prove that the best gifts of God (the peculiar attribute of whose glory is *to be no respecter of persons*) are infallibly entailed to a certain succession of men, without all respect of learning, wit, or honesty. Lastly, you must prove that the Holy Ghost was a private spirit, and might err, when he said, *The Lord giveth grace to the humble*, or, *the law of the Lord, wisdom unto the simple*; and that our Saviour's words, *Ventus spirat ubi vult*, did not import, (as he meant,) that his
 303 Spirit might enlighten whom he pleased: for if all these, and that, *Deus cujus vult miseretur*, be true, who can hinder him or his Spirit to open the eyes of some less learned, to behold clearly the true sense and meaning of that scripture, wherein many excellent

writers have either erred or been overseen? Or who can hinder God (if these places be true) to reveal his will to little ones, and keep it secret from the wise and mighty, because it is his pleasure so to do? and that for this end, that men should learn to rely upon his mercy and providence, not upon the authority or skill of men. Or who can hinder his omnipotency even in this age to make his power seen in our weakness? If this his power be not limited now, then may he still both reveal the true sense and meaning of his word in some points unto men of less capacity in others; and furnish them with ability too, for demonstrating by evidence of argument and surest grounds of reason unto others, that this sense must needs be the true sense, and that all other interpretations given of the same places, by men otherwise excellent for their learning and skill in scripture, cannot stand with those principles of Christian faith, which all sorts of believers steadfastly believe. Must such a man, or those to whom God reveals the truth by his ministry, doubt of the evidence of the truth revealed, and mistrust God's word, because others as learned, or more learned than either he that hath the truth revealed unto him first, or they that take it from him, are of another mind? He must verily by this objection. For a Jesuit would say, Why should he not think others as likely to have the Spirit as himself? Let him esteem of them as far better scholars, and men endued with as great, or greater measure of God's Spirit than himself: for so the scripture teacheth us not to be wise in our own conceit, *but to think better of others than of ourselves*^m. And again, *The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*ⁿ.

2. And yet both these rules concern the greatest scholars, and most skilful interpreters in some degree,

^m Phil. ii. 3.

ⁿ 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

as well as the meanest. For none is so absolutely good, none so far exceeds another, but in part may be exceeded by him. Nor doth this Christian modesty, which the scripture thus teacheth, bind any Christian soul or ingenuous mind to such absolute servility, as the objection must enforce upon all, if it prove aught; for there is no ingenuous man, especially of meaner gifts, but will in heart and conscience acknowledge many, both ancient and modern, for far more excellent scholars than himself, and yet be fully persuaded in conscience, that in sundry particulars he hath the truth on his side which they oppugn, and the true sense of God's Spirit in some points wherein they have erred or were ignorant. For neither will an indefinite proposition, in matters whose revelation depends upon the free will and liberty of God's Spirit, and are in respect of us contingent, infer every particular; nor will one or few particulars in any point infer an universal proposition, or such as we call *vera ut plurimum*, true for the most part. Now to say and believe that such a man is a better scholar and of far more excellent gifts, is but indefinite, not infinite for the extent of his scholarship or gifts beyond mine: wherefore it will not hence follow that he is a better scholar or interpreter in this, albeit he be so in many, or in most other particulars; much less will it follow that I am a bet-
304 ter scholar or interpreter than he, because I am better seen in this one or few particulars. The consequence or corollary of which two assertions is again as evident: "I may without breach of modesty think I have the truth on my side in sundry particulars, against him that is far better seen in scriptures and other sciences than myself." For albeit he were much better seen in both than he is, yet are his gifts measured as well as mine, although God hath given him a greater measure

of such gifts than me. Wherefore, as I would willingly yield unto him in infinite others, so may I safely dissent from him in this or other particulars, that are contained in the small measure of God's gifts upon me, without any just censure of arrogancy or breach of modesty, for entering the lists of comparison with him absolutely. For now we are to be compared but in this one or few cases; not according to the whole measure of God's gifts in us, which I acknowledge far greater in him, and reverence him as my superior for them. And as I acknowledge him absolutely for my better, so is he, in these particulars, in some sort to yield superiority unto me. Christian modesty teacheth every man not to be hasty or rash in gainsaying the doctrine of the ancient or other men of worth, but rather binds him to diligence in examination of the truth, to use deliberation in gainsaying the opinions of men better learned than himself. But Christianity itself binds all Christians not to believe men's authority against their own consciences, nor to admit of their doctrines for rules of faith, be they never so excellent, unless they can discern them to be the doctrine of that great Prophet, *cui Deus non admetitur Spiritum*; he cannot fail in any thing, and whatsoever he saith, or what his Spirit shall witness to my spirit to have proceeded from him, I am bound to believe. But for men, to whom God gives his Spirit but in measure, albeit in great measure, because I cannot know the particulars unto which it extends, I neither may absolutely refuse nor absolutely admit their doctrines for true, until I see perfectly how they agree with or disagree from his doctrine, of whose fulness we have all received. And even the truth of their writings, to whom he hath given his gifts in great measure, I am to examine, by

their consonancy unto that small measure of his undoubted gifts in myself, so far as they concern myself or others committed to my charge. And in the confidence of God's promises, for the increase of faith and grace to all such as use them aright, every Christian in sobriety of spirit may, by the principles of faith planted by God's finger in his heart, examine the sentences and decrees of the wisest men on earth; to approve them, if he can discern them for true; to confute them, if false; to spend his judgment, and limit the terms of his disobedience unto them, if doubtful; and finally, to admit or reject them, according to the degrees of their probability or improbability, which he upon sober, diligent, and impartial search directed and continued in reverence of God's word and sincere love of truth, shall find in them.

3. All the arguments which they can heap up from the variety of opinions amongst the learned (albeit they could make a catalogue of confusion in this kind, as long as the tower of Babel was high) can only
 305 prove thus much; That no man (especially no man endued with the gift of interpreting) may rely upon any other man's opinions, expositions, or decrees, without further examination of them; but only upon the scripture itself, which never varieth from itself nor from the truth; for this cause to be admitted as the only infallible rule of all Divine truths, whereunto every man must conform his belief and persuasions. For even this variety of opinions, about the particular sense or meaning of this canon of truth, amongst such as jointly acknowledge the infallibility of it in general, is a sufficient reason to disclaim any man's authority for the rule of faith; seeing experience shews such variety and partiality in them, and the general foundation of faith (held by all thus dissenting) binds every man

That this
dissension
amongst
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should rather
move
all sober
Christians
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all infallible
authority of
men than to
rely upon
any.

to believe that the scripture is not subject to any of these inconveniences. This undoubted certainty of it, when it is rightly understood and perceived, should encourage all to seek out the right sense and meaning of it, (which once found, is by all men's consent the surest foundation of faith, for by our adversaries' consent it is the ground of the church's faith,) and where they cannot presently attain unto it, to suspend their judgments, and not to follow men's authorities, (but only in particulars, whose generals are contained in scripture,) lest they may lead them against the true sense and meaning of it. And if men generally should have no other ground but man's authority, or believe this or that to be the meaning of scripture, because such a man or company of men doth tell him so; besides his wronging of God's Spirit herein, he should also wrong many other men, oftentimes far better learned and skilful in scriptures, more dear in the sight of God, and better acquainted with his Spirit, than are they on whose authority he relies. Every one to whom God hath given a wise heart and power in scripture, might justly challenge him of partiality and disobedience, in not giving as much to his authority as to the former. But as the truth, revealed unto him by the meanest of God's servants, binds his conscience to believe it; so the variety of other men's opinions (be it never so great, the authors and favourers of them never so well learned, never so stiff and confident in maintaining them) ought to be no motive, either to dissuade him from assenting unto the truth known, or to discourage him in the industrious and sober search of it, by such good means as God hath appointed for his calling. For there hath been as great variety of opinions in other sciences and faculties as in divinity; yet no later Jesuit, nor other learned papists, that I

have read or heard of, for these divers hundred years, have sought to prove, that no man can be certain he knows any thing, because many think they know that which they do not. Or if any Jesuit will renounce Aristotle, and revive the old academics' opinion "that there can be no certainty of any thing, but only an opinion;" our universities shall be ready to answer him, albeit hereby they should disenable their supposed infallible rule as much as ours. In the meantime, holding Aristotle's doctrine about the certainty of sciences for true, they answer themselves in all they can object against us in this point. For they neither deny a certainty in secular arts, because many err; nor do they persuade young students in their schools to give over
306 their studious and industrious searching into speculative sciences, because many have taken much pains in them to little purpose; nor do they hold it sufficient for good scholars in such matters to rely wholly on other men's judgments, without any trial of conclusions or examination of arguments, according to the principles of those sciences which they have professed. In a word, the variety of opinions hath not yet occasioned them to create a pope of arts and secular sciences, albeit such a creature were (by their arguments) much more necessary, or (at least) less harmful in those faculties than in matters of religion. For in them we have no promise for the assistance of a secret teacher, the true illuminator of our souls, whose authority is as infallible as the Spirit of truth. Aristotle takes it for an infallible token that there is a certainty to be had in sciences, because all men think themselves certain in their persuasions of things that may be known; as well those that know not the truth, but only think they know it, as those that know it indeed. If Aristotle's argument (which the Jesuits so acknowledge) be good, then is their

argument in this cause most absurd. Many men (say they) persuade themselves they know the right sense of sundry places in scripture when they do not; therefore no man, no private man, no man but the pope, (*qui neque Deus est neque homo,*) by any search or industry, can be sure that he hath it. Whereas by Aristotle's reason, (which indeed is a rule of reason,) the contrary rather follows, That there is a certainty to be had concerning the truth and true sense of scripture, by all such as seek it aright, because even such as err, and seek it amiss, are strongly persuaded of their certainty in it. From the same topic do the schoolmen and other judicious contemplators prove a certainty of true and perfect bliss, able alone to satiate the greedy appetite and stay the unconstant longing of man's soul, because even miscreants, and such as indefatigably hold on like dromedaries in those ungracious courses, which in wiser heathens' sight lead directly into infelicity and true misery, cannot cast away all conceit of happiness from which they wander, but rather suppose it to be seated in those sensual pleasures which they follow. Yet would our adversaries' arguments disprove all certainty in apprehension of true happiness with greater probability than they can impeach the assurance of private spirits in any other points of faith, as might (to omit other reasons) be proved by this one; Because some of their popes (none of which, as they suppose, can err in ordinary matters of faith) never have any taste or apprehension of true happiness.

4. Of the manner of knowing the true sense of scripture, occasion will be given us in the last part of this discourse. Of the impediments which trouble most men in this search, and of the original of all errors in Divine matters, and the means to avoid them, we shall

307 speak, by God's assistance, in the article of the God-head. Thus much may now suffice, that no man ought to be dismayed in seeking, or despair to find the true sense and meaning of scriptures, in all points necessary for him in his calling, because other men, much more expert in all kind of learning than himself, have foully erred in this search, and finally missed of that they sought. For out of the rules of scripture already set down, when such temptations shall arise in our breasts, we may quell them thus: They who have gone astray were much better learned than I in all kind of knowledge: it may be they were hence more confident of their gifts; for *scientia inflat*, their excellent knowledge might puff them up with self-conceit; and he that is wisest of all hath said, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the prudent shall be hid*^o: it may be, as they were exceeding wise, so they much gloried in their wisdom; but I will seek to glory only in the Lord, of whom I have received every good gift I have, and will always esteem this best, which shall teach me not to rejoice above that which is meet in any other: as they were prudent, so, it may be, they were proud, and the scripture saith, "*Deus resistit superbis*," *God resisteth the proud*, and such as trust too much to their own conceit. As for me, I will not be *highminded but fear*, for the same scripture tells me, *Deus dat gratiam humilibus*, yea, grace to understand the true sense and meaning of his gracious promises made in Christ. And in confidence of them, I will continue these my daily prayers; "Lord, grant me true, unfeigned, Christian humility, and with it, grace to know the wonderful things of thy law." Others have erred, of far more excellent natural parts, even men of deepest reach and

^o Isa. xxix. 14.

surest observation. It may be, as their wits were stronger, and their understanding riper, so their wills were unrulier, and their desires or affections greener. But, O Lord, break the stubbornness of my will, purify my heart, and *renew a right spirit within me*: so shall I see thee and thy goodness in thy word, which shall enlighten me to teach thy ways unto the wicked, and *convert sinners unto thee*: so shall thy law, thy perfect law, convert my soul, for *thy testimonies are sure, and give wisdom to the simple*^o. Yea, but they who first instructed me in thy word do dissent from me in the interpretation of it. It may be they have not followed those rules which thou taughtest them; Lord, give me grace to meditate aright upon thy testimonies, so shall *I have more understanding than my teachers*^p. But what if the most reverend and ancient Fathers of former times were of a contrary mind? O Lord, they were faithful servants in thy house, and yet faithful but as servants, not as thy Son^q: and it may be thou didst suffer those thy worthy servants to go awry, to try whether I thy most unworthy servant would forsake the footsteps of thine anointed Son to follow them: but, *Lord, teach me thy statutes, so shall I* (in this point wherein I differ from them) *have more understanding than the ancient*^r. Thy name hath been already glorified in their many excellent gifts, all which they received of thy bounteous hand; and it may be that now it is thy pleasure, in this present difficulty, to ordain thy praise out of such infants' mouths as mine. They out of this thy fertile and goodly field have gathered many years' provision for thy great household thy church, but yet either let somewhat fall, or left much behind, which may be sufficient for us thy

^o Ps. xix. 7. ^p Ps. cxix. 99. ^q Heb. iii. 5. ^r Ps. cxix. 100.

poor servants to glean after them, either for our own private use, or for that small flock which thou hast set us to feed. And let all sober-hearted Christians judge, yea let God that searcheth the very heart and reins, and Christ Jesus the Judge of all mankind, give judgment out of his throne, whether in reasoning thus we are more injurious to the ancient Fathers deceased, than they unto the Ancient of days, and Father of the world to come, in denying the free gifts and graces of
 308 his Holy Spirit unto succeeding as well as former ages. We reverence the Fathers as men endued with an especial measure of his grace, as men that have left many excellent writings behind them, fit for the instructions of later ages as well as former; they will not honour God as much. For their arguments conclude, if any thing, him to have been a gracious God, and his Spirit a guide, only of some few generations of old; but in this present, and all late past, they make him a God, his Spirit a guide, and his word a rule, only of the pope, who must be the only God, the only guide, and his decisions about scripture the only rule of all other men's faith; yea, a rule of scripture itself, as shall afterwards appear.

SECT. IV.

The last of the three main Objections before proposed, which was concerning our supposed defective Means for composing Controversies, or retaining the Unity of Faith, fully answered and re-torted: That the Roman Faith hath no Foundation.

THE last objection is: "Our church hath no means of taking up controversies, seeing we permit the use of scriptures unto all, and every man to follow that sense

of them which he liketh best." We do indeed permit every man to satisfy his own conscience in matters of salvation, and God forbid (for by his apostles he hath forbidden) we should usurp any supreme lordship or absolute dominion over their faith. Yet a Christian obedience unto pastors we require in the flock; impossible in our judgment to be performed aright, unless undertaken more for conscience than for fear of punishment. And as obedience, if not framed by conscience, can never be sincere; so conscience, unless regulated by the sacred canon, must needs be erroneous, and always relish more of superstition than religion. The gospel we ever esteemed as a gladsome message of peace and salvation; and do we, by seeking to square men's thoughts and affections unto it, prepare their hearts to deadly war? It is, we know, and you deny not, the fountain of life, apt to season the waters of Marah and Meribah, a medicine able to allay all bitterness of contention, and qualify the poisonous roots of strife; and do we, by setting it open for fainting souls to quench their thirst, dig pits of destruction for them to fall into? The scriptures in general we have proved to be a plain and facile rule, *a light unto men's feet, and a lantern unto their paths*; and do we, by permitting the free use of it to all, first explicated and unfolded by the dispensers of Divine mysteries, lay stumblingblocks in their way not possible to be descried or avoided, or spread a snare to catch their souls in darkness? We permit every man to follow 309 that sense or meaning of it which his conscience liketh best; but we permit no man to frame the liking of his conscience to his lust; we teach the contrary as a principle of faith and Christian obedience. If any disobedient spirits list to contend, where they should perform obedience, we know the church of God hath no

such custom ; all such contentions we detest, and labour, as much as you, by all means lawful, to quell : the same internal means (God's word) are alike free to both, but more used by us which rely more upon them : all the difficulty is about means external.

CHAP. XXVI.

Containing the true State of the Question, or a Comparison between the Romish Church and ours, for their Means of preventing or composing Controversies.

1. THE question then must be, first, whether we can as well discern such as read scriptures, as you such as read your church decrees, with contentious minds. Secondly, whether we have means as forcible and effectual as you have any to reform them, or stay the spreading contagion of their heresy. To begin with the latter.

Our manner of proceeding against contentious spirits, as effectual for the end proposed as the Romish church hath any.

2. Such as you discern to be contentious, or to dissent from that doctrine which you conceive or teach for true, you threaten, with what?—the pope or church's curse. Such as we discern to breed contentions amongst us, or dissensions from that truth which we in conscience think all ought to profess, we threaten with death and damnation, and the terror of that dreadful day which shall accomplish that we denounced *against all such by whom offences come*^s. Will not the continual preaching of this doctrine be as forcible to deter a man from sowing sedition as the anniversary solemnity of the pope's curse? Will men believe a Jesuit from the pope, when they will not believe Moses and the prophets, nor Christ Jesus himself? But you will say, Although men will not be kept

^s Matt. xviii. 7.

in order with Peter's keys, yet will they dread Paul's sword: or rather, if they will not dread the fire of hell, which must but long hence torment their souls, yet will they stand in awe of the fagot always ready in your church for plaguing heretics. If this were the best means to stop men's mouths from professing what they are in conscience persuaded the scripture tells them, the fundamental points of Christianity had never been known either to you or us; Christian religion itself had been martyred with Christ's martyrs. But as their ashes was the fertilest soil wherein the seed of the gospel could be sown; so was the long and cruel oppression of such as dissented from your church, as a lopping or pruning to cause ours flourish, and hath at length set the Israel of God at liberty from Egyptian slavery.

3. But supposing this violent course, upon great 310 exigence of circumstances either in the matter, manner, or times of contentions, to be both lawful and expedient; yet could not the ordinary practice of it be more effectual to restrain men from contradicting, than it might be to enforce them to oppugn the truth. It might, according to the divers dispositions of such as manage it, be a means, one way or other alike forcible, either to retain men in heresy, idolatry, and infidelity, or in the unity of true and lively faith: albeit fear alone may make men perfect heretics or infidels, but not inwardly or sincerely faithful.

4. And as for our church, albeit she search not so narrowly into the secrets of every man's conscience, nor be so tyrannically jealous of every word that might be ill interpreted, nor so outrageously cruel in punishing known dissension from her, or discovered error; yet (God be praised) she hath Paul's sword as well as yours, which our magistrate bears not in vain, but can

unsheath it, when need requires, against such as are open and evident abettors of contentions, unless perhaps you will except that it hath not been so much exercised in cutting you off from amongst us, (who are the ringleaders of all division, debate, and trouble in our church,) as it might be according to your doctrine. If in the practice of this coactive authority over contentious spirits there be any fault, God amend it, for in our church's doctrine concerning this point there is none: and God grant our magistrates may practise as our faithful pastors teach; whose doctrine is, that this external as well as the internal power is given for edification, not for destruction, and must be directed by the same rule; that the use and practice of it must be limited by the end, that the end of it is by injunction of things good, and prohibition of evil, to proportion men's actions and conversations to the rule of faith and law of God, that so every member of the commonwealth, thus wrought and fashioned by the coactive power, may be more easily transformed into a member of Christ, as being more apt and pliable for the word of life to work upon. Nor are we so precisely wedded to any determinate course for quelling or preventing contentious schisms or heresies, but we may admit what other soever time shall detect more effectual for attaining the former end; unto which our love is such as will not suffer us dislike any means allied to it, though having affinity with your church: part of whose external discipline we are not ashamed to use unto good, because by you abused to bad and wicked purposes. But for your church's practice in the use of your best means for avoiding all contentions, you plead no infallibility: therein you may fail as well as we, and the question now is about our doctrine.

5. Out of that which hath been said, our means for punishing such as we know to be contentious appears as good as yours ; whose use, so far as we like it, is as free for us as for yourselves ; let us now see whether we have means as good or as infallible as yours, to discern who are contentious.

6. For the pope's infallibility, whether it be any ³¹¹ or no, we are anon to inquire, and we may not in this place give you leave to prejudice our church with the supposal of it. Nor do yourselves make this discretion of contentious spirits any essential part thereof.

7. None of you (that I have read) doth attribute any prophetic spirit to the pope in this case, as if he could descry the storms of contentions which might cause shipwreck of faith, before they arise, as far off as Elias did the rain, when it first began to gather into a cloud like a man's hand. The excellency of his infallibility, by your own positions, (if I mistake not,) consists in the decisions of controversies brought unto him, not in the discovery or finding out of such as breed contention. But doth he vouchsafe to decide all controversies that arise in his dominions, albeit brought unto him ?

That our means for discerning the original causes or occasions of contentions are fully equivalent to the Romish church's.

Vix vacat exiguis rebus adesse Jovi.

The exercise of this *dominus Deus vester* plenary power, is much like the use of the heathen gods upon the old Roman stage.

*Nec Deus intersit, nisi nodus vindice dignus
Inciderit—*

Unless it be to loose some Gordian knot,
The pope's decision is not easily got.

And where it is got, it goes no further than to the just and infallible censure of the opinion itself, in punishing the authors or abettors of adjudged heresies or

schisms : he may err as well as we, because herein he goes but by the information of private men, who neither are so absolutely holy, but they may prove partial; nor so wise and skilful always, but they may err in their information, especially where it goes successively from ear to ear, and from one country dialect to another, (as drink from vessel to vessel,) always losing some part of its proper and native sapor, so that it may relish otherwise to his holiness' mouth, than it did at the first setting abroad by the author.

8. And seeing the best means to avoid contentions is the just punishment of them that causelessly cause them ; your church's authority, being herein so much more obnoxious to error and misinformation, as her diocese is larger, less uniform, or more remote, is liable to many exceptions, from which such little ones, as she out of her greatness contemns, are free. Nor is the question (as you bear the simple in hand) betwixt public and private spirits, but between your private men and ours ; as whether yours can better discern who are contentious throughout your vast precincts, than ours, who are such amongst us at home. That no man should dissent from the doctrine of the catholic church, you all agree. Some of you dissent from it, (as most of their fellows think,) who yet will not profess, but rather seek to cloak their dissent, either with colours of consonance, or pretended reasons of no repugnance unto catholic tenents. Catharinus will defend the council of Trent, and yet hold certainty of
312 salvation^t. Soto and Bellarmine reprove him : but how could either of them discern whether Catharinus had the true meaning of the Trent-council or not ?

^t Bellarmin. lib. 3. de Justif. cap. 3, 4, &c. disputes so eagerly against this bishop, as might have

procured a censure of irregularity, had he lived in his diocese.

Catharinus (I take it) had a suffrage in making those decrees, whereof neither Soto nor Bellarmine were allowed, much less authentic interpreters: for the pope's bull ^uconfirming that council, prohibits all private interpretations of it, yet hath not the pope or any public authority since that time condemned Catharinus for this dissension. How knew Maldonate^x, that Janse-
nius, Hesselius, and others which deny that Christ's words in the sixth of John are to be understood of sacramental eating, did vary from the received doctrine of your church, and jump with heretics? Difference between yourselves and us in this point you shall never be able to assign any. Tell us by what means you can discern who dissent from your canons, and our answer is ready: we can discern who dissent from

^u Apostolica autoritate inhi-
bemus omnibus, tam ecclesiasticis
personis, cujuscunque sint ordinis,
conditionis, et gradus, quam lai-
cis, quocunque honore, ac potes-
tate præditis, prælatis quidem
sub interdicti ingressus ecclesiæ,
aliis vero quicunque fuerint sub
excommunicationis latæ senten-
tiæ pœnis, ne quis sine autori-
tate nostra audeat ullos commen-
tarios, glossas, annotationes, scho-
lia, ullumve omnino interpretatio-
nis genus super ipsius concilii de-
cretis quocunque modo edere, aut
quidquam quocunque nomine,
etiam sub prætextu majoris de-
cretorum corroborationis, aut exe-
cutionis, aliove quæsito colore,
statuere. Bullæ Pii quarti super
confirmatione œcum. gener. Con-
cil. Trident.

^x Maldonatus' censure of these
men, for dissenting (as he thinks)
from their church, is so sharp and
peremptory, as might well have
caused contention, should his

writings have come into their
hands. Impediunt nos quo mi-
nus acriter et vehementer inve-
hamur in hæreticos, catholici
quidam, qui, nescio qua impru-
dentia hereticis se junxerunt.
Neminem nomino, neminem vio-
latæ accuso religionis: scio ca-
tholicos, scio doctos, scio religio-
sos ac probos viros esse, sed minime
profecto utilem atque fidelem in
hac re operam ecclesiæ navave-
runt. Quod contra scripturæ sen-
sum, contra patrum omnium in-
terpretationem, contra tacitum,
imo minime tacitum, sed satis
superque explicatum consensum
ecclesiæ dixerint atque conten-
derint hoc loco de sacramento
non agi, quod ut benignissime
dicam est temerarium, graviori-
bus condemnarem verbis nisi
crederem viros bene catholicos
errore magis animi quam vitio,
in hæreticorum sententiam im-
pegisse. Maldonat. Comment.
in sext. Johan. [v. 53.]

ours by the same, if no other were left us. This briefly may suffice for removal of prejudices easy to be wrought in such as compare not particulars with particulars, or consider not the use of external magistracy acknowledged by us, for punishing contentious spirits, or our means of discerning who are such; in both which respects we are at least equal to the Romans.

That the Romish Church hath most need of some excellent Means for taking up Contentions, because it necessarily breeds so many and so grievous.

1. FOR the main point, as well about the original of contentions and schisms as incorrigible continuance in them, only this difference I find, that we permitting a sober search of scriptures unto all, not binding any man's faith to the judgment of man, leave a possibility to the learned of finding out a liberty unto all of professing the truth found, for the health and life of their souls, without dread or danger to their bodies. And seeing we bind no man upon pain of damnation to believe any point of doctrine which is not plainly and expressly set down in scriptures, we minister no occasion of deadly dissension unto any. For contentions amongst ourselves, they are rather distempers than dangerous diseases, nor do they affect those parts of religion in which our spiritual life is properly seated. Yet even these in latter years had been, and always would be fewer, and their danger less, were it not for those foxes which your church suborns to bring fire-brands into the Lord's harvest. And even these your foxes in this our land, how soever, for this public mischief against us, and the intended combustion of our church, their tails were tied together by your church's knot, have yet whet their cankered teeth as eagerly,

and opened their venomous mouths as bitterly one against another, as any (but they) could have done either against us or any creatures living. But to leave private dissensions amongst yourselves; your church prohibiting men the ingenuous search of scriptures, and free profession of their conscience, tying them to submit their judgments at all adventure unto the corrupt doctrine of your clergy, hath set open a wide gap to such gross opinions and monstrous heresies, as no man, unless his judgment had been surprised by your pretended authority, or his spiritual senses locked up in superstition, sleep, and midnight darkness, would ever have assented unto, much less have tolerated, when men were taught to hold them for points of faith, as infallibly true as the scripture itself, only because your church hath proposed and practised them.

2. Thus did your doctrine and filthy practice of indulgences, (to omit many more,) from some surmises of the ancient, concerning a third place after this life; as it were, from a small seed or kernel, by little and little come up to such a mighty growth, that it violently rent and tore asunder the main walls of Christ's temple, and caused that irreparable breach and rupture betwixt the southern and northern parts of Christ's church, established in this western part of the world. And albeit Cassander, with divers other learned men in your church, both before and about the time of Trent council, wished a reformation of many points maintained by you, hoping the Lutheran and other reformed churches would thereby be drawn to unity with you again; yet what one suspicious opinion hath 314 that council cleared, what bad amended, what harsh or odious one hath it mitigated? Nay, what possibility hath it left for the amendment of any in ages to come, amongst such as shall acknowledge that authority in-

fallible, which hath thundered out so many anathemas to all gainsayers? Before, it was lawful for Cassander and Cajetan, Espenceus and others, to shew their dislike of your doctrine, and signify their desires of amendment; retaining some relics or fashion of men that had been freeborn, not slaves or vassals to corrupt and dissolute tyrants. They used their liberty of speech even in those cases, wherein it is not now lawful for any in your church to mutter, no not so much as to sigh or groan under that heavy yoke, which their forefathers grudged to bear, whose weight and hardness notwithstanding you still increase, whilst your upstart statesmen the Jesuits (like Rehoboam's green-headed counsellors) daily seek to make your ecclesiastic monarch's little finger greater than his predecessor's loins.

3. Some Jesuit or other happily would reply—Had Luther been quiet, the church had been still at such peace and unity as it enjoyed for many years before. What manner of peace and unity was that? Any other than such as usually is found in any political Argus-eyed tyranny, before the sinews of it shrunk, or the ligaments be dissolved? where no man may move but he is seen, nor mutter but he is heard; where the least secret signification of any desire of freedom in speech, or liberty in action, is interpreted for open mutiny, and the least motion unto mutiny held matter sufficient for a cruel death. These were the bonds of your peace and unity, in this point of your ecclesiastic monarchy. As for your peace in other speculative points of less use or commodity to your state, it was like the revellings or drunken consorts of servants in their night-sportings, when the master of the house is asleep in a retired room. Any schoolman might broach what opinion he list, and make his auditors drunk with

it; others might quarrel with him and them, in as uncivil sort as they list, so no weapon were drawn against the pope's peace. Albeit in the meantime the scripture suffered as open violence and abuse as Priscian doth, when drunken or dunstical grammarians brawl in extemporary Latin. As for your cardinals and statesmen, they were at league indeed; but it was *foedissimum foedus*, a league solemnized with more than barbarous and heathenish sacrifice, with the blood of many thousand silly lambs, for whom the Lamb of God had sacrificed his precious body and blood. What number of Hussites, Bohemians, Picards, poor souls of Lyons, were made a prey unto your wolfish (I may not say, lions') teeth, seeing, as the Italian poet argues, this title so ill befits your popes:

Nec cadit in turpes nobilis ira feras:

No lions they; for noble wrath

No place in such base creatures hath.

But what troops of such harmless souls were slain, burnt, and tormented, for their longing after the liberty of the sons of God, nor we nor you that live this day can know, nor shall be known until the register of the 315 book of life be opened. And howsoever they went (as their Lord and Master, the great Shepherd of their souls, had done before them) *like sheep unto the slaughter*, whilst their friends' and kinsfolk's cries were drowned with your Jewish melody, and joy at their destructions; yet we assure ourselves, (and ye might dread God's further judgment by the event,) it was the cry of their innocent blood which filled the court of heaven, and in a just revenge of their oppression, procured Luther's commission for Germany's revolt. And yet say you, Luther was the cause of dissension in Christ's church. Why so? Because he burst your former unity, whose only bond was hellish

tyranny. Of such a dissension, and of the breach of such an unity, we grant he was the cause; and you have no just cause to accuse him of dissension or disobedience for it. For all kind of unity is not to be preferred before all kind of dissension or revolt. He that will not dissent from any man, or society of men, upon any occasion whatsoever, must live at perpetual enmity with his God, and war continually against his own soul^y. For there is an unity in rebellion, a brotherhood in mischief, a society in murder both of body and soul. Wherefore, unless you can prove your cause or title, for exacting such absolute submission of men's souls and spirits unto your church, or popes' decrees, to be most just and warrantable by commission from the highest Power in heaven; Luther, and all that followed him, did well, in preferring a most just, most necessary, and sacred war, before a most unjust and shamefully execrable peace: a peace, no peace, but a banding in open rebellion against the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth, and his sacred laws, given for the perpetual government of mankind throughout their generations.

That this very challenge of this infallible authority of the Romish church for ending all controversies, doth necessarily occasion the greatest dissension from it that can be in all religious minds.

4. To press you a little with your objections against us and our doctrine, for nourishing dissension: Our church (say you) hath no means of taking up controversies aright. If this were true, yet (God be praised) it ministereth no just occasion of any dangerous quarrel. But be ours as it may be: hath your church any better means for composing controversies of greatest moment, that reign this day throughout the Christian world? Or doth it not by this insolent, proud, tyrannical claim of sovereignty, and imperial umpireship over all other churches in all controversies, give just

^y In this sense Christ is said to have come, *not to send peace, but a sword unto the world.*

cause of the greatest dissension and extremest opposition that can be imagined could be given in the church of Christ? The whole world besides cannot minister any like it. Nature and common reason teach us, that a man may with far safer conscience take arms in defence of his life and liberty, than in hope to avoid some petty loss or grievance, or to revenge some ordinary cause of private discontent: the quarrel in the one (though with resistance unto our adversaries' blood) may be justifiable, which in the other (albeit within the compass of less danger) were detestable. But grace doth teach us this equity, *skin for skin, all that ever a man hath*, the whole world, (and more if he had it,) is to be spent in the defence of faith, the only seat of our spiritual life, or for the liberty of our conscience. You alone teach, that all men should submit their faith to your decrees without examination of them, or appeal from them: we usurp no such authority, either over yours or any men's consciences. You 316 challenge our sovereign lord, and all his people, to be your ghostly slaves; we only stand in our own defence: we exact no such absolute service or allegiance, either of you or any other the meanest Christian church, no nor our prince and clergy of the natural members of our own. They only seek (would God they sought aright in time) to keep them short at home, whose long reach might hail over sea your long sought tyranny over this people of Brittany, happily now divided (Lord, ever continue this happy division) from the Romish world. Unless your means of taking up so great contentions (as hence in equity ought to arise) be so superexcellent, that it can make amends where all is marred, (for which I cannot see what means can be sufficient, unless you either let your suit fall, or prove your title to be most just by arguments

most authentic and strong,) you evidently impose a necessity of the greatest contentions, and extremest opposition that any abuse or wrong, loss or danger, possibly to befall a Christian man, (either as a man or Christian, either in things of this life, or that other to come, either concerning his very life and liberty, whether temporal or spiritual, or whatsoever else is more dear unto him,) can occasion or breed.

5. That which ye usually premise to work such a prejudice in credulous and unsettled minds, as may make your sleight pretences of reason or scripture (to be sifted anon) seem most firm and solid to ground your infallibility upon, is, the supposed excellency of it for taking up all controversies in religion, and so of retaining unity of holy catholic faith in the bond of love. If indeed it were so excellent for this purpose, you might rest contented with it, and heartily thank God for it. Yea, but because you have this excellent means, which we have not, nor any like unto it, yours is the true catholic church, and ours a congregation of schismatics. What if we would invent the like? would that serve to make ours a true church? Or tell us, what warrant have you for inventing or establishing your supposed most excellent order for taking up controversies? *Was it from heaven? or was it from men?* If from heaven, we will obey it; if from men, we will imitate you in it, if we like it. But first, let us a little further examine it.

CHAP. XXVIII.

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That of two senses, in which the excellency of the Romish Church's pretended means for retaining the Unity of Faith, can only possibly be defended, the one (from the former Discourse) proved apparently false ; the other in itself as palpably ridiculous.

1. When you affirm the infallibility of your church to be so excellent a means for taking up all controversies in religion, you have no choice of any other, but one of these two meanings; either you mean, it is so excellent a means *de facto*, and doth take up all controversies; or else, it would be such as might take up all, if all men would subscribe unto it^y.

2. If you take the former sense or meaning, we can evidently take you (as we say) with the very manner of falsehood. For this claim of such authority (as we partly shewed before) is the greatest eyesore to all faithful eyes that can be imagined, and makes your religion more irreconcilable to the truth. And for this church of England, as in it some dissent from you in many points, others in fewer, some more in one, some more in another; so in this of your church's infallibility, all of us dissent from you most evidently, most eagerly, without all hope of reconciliation or agreement, unless you utterly disclaim the title in as plain terms as hitherto you have challenged it. Your dealing herein is as absurdly impious and impiously

^y This division is most immediate in our present subject. Wherein we only examine whether from the known or possible fruits of the Romish church's means, (so excellent as is pretended,) for composing controversies, any argument can be drawn to

work a prejudicial conceit in men's minds, (that it were likely Christ had bequeathed such authority to their church,) before they come to direct examination of the main point (what right she hath to the challenged supremacy by scriptures).

insolent, as if any Christian prince or state should challenge another, as free and absolute as himself, for his tributary or vassal, and traduce him for a seditious member of Christendom, because he would not compose the quarrel thus injuriously sought, with the surrender of his crown and dignity.

3. Princes may conclude a peace, for civil and free commerce of their people, though professing sundry religions; and they and their clergy might perhaps procure a mitigation of some other points, now much in controversy: but though all others might, yet this admits no terms of parley for any possible reconciliation. The natural separation of this island from those countries wherein this doctrine is professed, shall serve as an everlasting emblem of the inhabitants' divided hearts, at least in this point of religion: and let them, O Lord, be cut off speedily from amongst us, and their posterity transported hence, never to enjoy again the least good thing this land affords: let no print of their memory be extant so much as in a tree or stone within our coast: or let their names by such as remain here after them be never mentioned, or always to their endless shame; who living here amongst us, will not imprint these or like wishes in their hearts, and daily mention them in their prayers,

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*Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas,
Imprecor arma armis, pugnent ipsique nepotes.*

Which words, though uttered in another case, applied to this, sound thus much to all well-affected English or British ears,

Let our and foreign coasts join battle in the main,
Ere this foul blasphemy Great Britain ever stain:
Where never let it come, but floating in a flood
Of ours, our nephews', and their children's children's blood.

4. The leaven of the Pharisees, whereof our Savi-

our willed his disciples to beware, was sweet bread in respect of this pestiferous dough, whose poison is so diffused throughout the whole body and mass of Romish religion, as it hath polluted every parcel therein, and makes even those particular points to be damnable in modern papists, which in the ancient holding them from other grounds were pardonable. Such as held a kind of purgatory, or third place after this life, evangelical counsels, invocation of saints, or the like, because they thought the scripture taught them, were deceived in these particular scriptures, but yet reserved their faithful allegiance to God's word in general. Nay, even those particular errors and mistakings of the sense of scriptures, were witnesses and pledges of their obedience unto the scripture, or word of God; when they therefore believed them, because they were immediately persuaded in conscience that the scriptures (the rule of their conscience) did teach them. But while you hold the same opinions, not because you are persuaded in conscience (immediately ruled by scripture) that they are contained in scripture, but because the church, which as ye suppose cannot err, doth teach them; or to speak more plainly, whiles you yourselves either believe, or teach others to believe them or the scriptures concerning them; because the church, whose authority in this and all other cases you acknowledge for the infallible rule of your faith, commands you so to do; you hereby openly renounce your own, and solicit the people to alienate their allegiance from God and his word; and the passing over or yielding up of steadfast and absolute assent unto any particular point in your religion, upon these grounds, is as evident a witness of high treason, committed against God by the party thus believing, as swearing of that fealty or allegiance to a pretended vicegerent or deputy, which is only due to the prince

himself, would be in a natural and sworn subject. Wherefore the supposed infallibility of your church is no such excellent means of taking up all controversies, if your meaning be in the former sense proposed. For it is so far from taking up all, that it puts an impossibility of having any betwixt you and us taken up, unless you abjure it quite; for it makes all the rest of your opinions deadly, to such as steadfastly believe it, or for it, them.

5. Your meaning then must be; that this infallibility of your church would be an excellent means for taking up all controversies, if all men would subscribe unto it. Indeed I must confess, there would soon be
319 an end of all, or rather, no controversies should ever be begun, if every man would resolve with himself not to dissent from others, but let them hold what they list, he would hold the very same: or if all men would bind themselves to abide some one man's, or a major part of some few or more determinate persons' determinations without more ado. In this case one might say of his judge, He shall determine for me; and another might reply, Nay, but for my opinion; the third might say, He shall judge as I will have him; and the fourth reply, Or rather as I will: and yet never a one dissent from other, but all agree. All of them might have the judge's sentence at as absolute command as the shepherd had the weather. For every one might have him determine as he pleased, because all of them were fully resolved to be pleased with whatsoever he should determine. If you dream of such an unity in faith, or such a manner of composing contentions; it must be further disputed, whether this were not an open dissension or solemn compact for moving a general apostasy from the true faith. And they that labour for such an union in points of faith and salvation, do in effect solicit the whole Christian world

to run hand in hand, but headlong, into open infidelity, lest perhaps by breaking companies, some might slide into schisms and heresies. Should the Ramists and Aristotelians, or generally all the professors of secular arts and sciences in our universities, bind themselves under penalty of expulsion, or by solemn vow, never to swerve from the beadle of beggars or john-a-dogs his determinations, and resolutions in any point of logic, philosophy, or metaphysics; would this be a sweet match to take up all controversies, or contentions between college and college in our schools? were this so excellent a way, to retain the unity of the truth, and skill in those faculties? or rather the only ready way to make all bondslaves to error, ignorance, and falsehood? And yet might we, with more safety, delegate greater authority in these cases to every one than we may to any living in matters of faith and religion; over which, or over ourselves in respect of which, we have no lawful power or authority. For this and other reasons should we be more afraid to subscribe unto any mortal man's authority, as unto a judge most absolute and infallible, whose decrees we may not resist, from whose sentence we may not appeal in matters of faith; than to refer ourselves wholly unto the sole judgment of the merest natural fool living, in matters of secular learning and natural knowledge. For (besides the danger hence accruing to ourselves) God our Creator, Christ our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Comforter and Instructor, have far greater interest in our souls and consciences, than either Aristotle or Plato, or any other philosopher, or philosophy itself, hath in our opinions or persuasions.

6. But though gratitude to our God could not move us, are those blessed hopes of immortality so little worth, as upon every light or no occasion we should

adventure their eternal loss? And yet idly, desperately, and frantically, adventure it we do, unless such as urge us with solemn subscription to this more than monarchical supremacy over our souls, (enstamped not with any Roman Cæsar's, but God's own image and superscription,) can shew us sufficient warrant, that thus to
 320 offer up, not only the calves of our lips, but even our faith, (the best tribute our hearts can yield,) wholly into Christ's pretended vicar's hands, be not a witness of our rebellion against Christ himself, the supreme Lord, as well of them that challenge this authority, as of us, of whom this servile subjection is exacted. All the warrant or evidence which in this case they can pretend, must either be drawn from the rules of reason or from the scriptures, the rule (as we contend) of faith: which for this reason may justly control all pretended rules of natural reason. And (as we have said before^z) if the pope be (as usually he is) but *homo ψυχικὸς*, or *ψυχικὸς* with a witness; then both scripture and reason teach us, that he cannot perceive the things of God, nor the meaning of his Spirit; for, as our apostle saith, *they are foolish unto him*. And if they be foolish to him, then is he as foolish a judge of them, and of all things that must be spiritually discerned, as the merest natural idiot would be of natural philosophy, or other secular arts or sciences. Even to this one place of scripture, uttered by the Spirit of God and the ministry of that apostle, no sufficient answer can be given, without the evident testimony of the same Spirit, (under some prophet's, apostle's, or evangelist's hand,) either mitigating or restraining that sense which the words naturally import, and we collect: whose probability in itself, and consonancy with other scriptures, are so great, that we stand bound by our general alle-

^z See chap. 14. paragr. 4, 5, &c. vol. i. p. 445, &c.

giance, which we owe unto God's Spirit, to suspect all men for incompetent judges or witnesses in matters concerning God, unless we know certainly of what spirit they are, or have great inducements to presume them of a better spirit, and in more favour with the Spirit of God, than they themselves report their popes to be.

CHAP. XXIX.

That their Arguments, drawn from Conveniency of Reason, or pretended Correspondency between civil and ecclesiastical Regiment, do prejudice themselves, not us.

1. THAT this is no general dictate of common reason, or any part of the law of nature, reason and common sense make evident: and we may rest assured hereof, in that no Jesuit, nor other stickler for the pope's authority, hath been so impudent hitherto as to avouch thus much. That there are some probabilities or conveniences, which in reason might persuade any indifferent man that there must be some one umpire or tribunal seat, by whose authority all controversies of religion must be determined, Bellarmine thus goes about to prove: "God was not ignorant that many difficulties about faith would arise in the church:" What then? "In reason then he was to provide his church of a judge:" suppose he were. "But this judge 321 cannot be the scripture, nor any private revealing spirit, nor any secular: therefore an ecclesiastical prince which may determine such matters either of himself alone, or at least with the advice and consent of bishops his associates. Nor hath any as yet, nor can any indeed imagine any other to whom the judgment of these things can possibly appertain^a."

^a Non ignorabat Deus multas in ecclesia exoriturus difficultates circa fidem; debuit igitur judicem aliquem ecclesiæ providere: at iste judex non potest esse scriptura, neque Spiritus

2. That neither the scripture, nor any private man, nor secular prince, is this judge, he labours to prove by arguments, whose strength hath been broken in the former discourses concerning the obscurity of scriptures and the varieties of interpretations. But how cunningly soever his sagacity may seem to have cast about, he is at the same default Valentian and Sacroboscus were; all of them overran the scent by leaping from one extreme to another, without search of the mean betwixt them: for they take it as granted, that we deny all living judges of controversies, because we acknowledge no absolute infallibility in any. Our assertion is, "The scripture is a law or rule most infallible, whereby every man must judge himself, whereby such as are in lawful authority may judge others for not judging themselves by it, but not always infallibly." Nor can it stand with the sobriety of Christian wisdom, to expect such a precise determination of all points disputed, much less disputable, among the learned, as might bind all men to an absolute belief (whether explicit or implicit) of this or that determinate sense, all others excluded. Notwithstanding the more conscious any ordinary judge is of his own or others' fallibility or facility of erring dangerously, if they should take upon them strictly to determine all religious doubts (much more all doubts) in matters of religion, that might be moved; the more infallibly may he rest assured that many cases of that quality are very doubtful; that in sundry of many opinions, all to his knowledge possible, as much may be as probably alleged for any one as for other. Now the true

revelans privatus, neque princeps secularis; igitur princeps ecclesiasticus, aut solus aut certe cum consilio et consensu coepiscoporum. Neque enim fingitur

neque fingi potest aliquid aliud ad quod hoc iudicium pertinere posse videatur. Bellarm. lib. 3. de Verbo Dei, cap. 9.

and proper use of an ecclesiastic judge or magistracy is, not only to punish oppugners of truths, either evident in themselves, and infallibly believed of all Christians, or generally received by the best and most impartial writers in every age; but as well to moderate men's carriage in controversies of the former nature; sometimes by restraining all peremptory assertions one way or other, all exasperating censures or contumelious contradictions; (as in difficulties equipendant betwixt an equality of contrary probabilities;) sometimes (as in matters not so useful, or unto whose search the signs of times present do not solicit us) by enjoining a general silence, that all may hearken with better attention to God always speaking by the ordinary course of his providence, albeit softly and leisurely, yet distinctly and audibly, to quiet minds already instructed in that heavenly knowledge, though not simply unto all; for many of us can perfectly distinguish men's voices whiles they repeat what in part we know, though not whiles they pronounce matters unheard before, or altogether unknown to us.

3. By this it may appear, would our adversaries make an equal comparison, that God hath better provided for his church's regiment in matters spiritual, than commonweals in temporal^b. First, the scripture 322 is a rule as all-sufficient for all such businesses, as any temporal laws could be for effecting their proper end, albeit we should suppose the Lord had dictated them immediately, as he did the scriptures. This our adversaries cannot deny, unless they doubt whether the eternal Spirit have as great skill in heavenly matters

^b Christ's church having by our doctrine a most infallible written law, and living, though but fallible ecclesiastic judges, is much better provided for in all matters spiritual, than political societies, whose laws as well as judges are fallible, in matters civil.

as in secular. For (as we shewed before) he moved holy men to write the scriptures, that we by them might attain eternal life. Secondly, besides this most infallible rule or law, we admit an equal necessity of ecclesiastical and temporal judges, an equal authority in both to give sentence *viva voce*. And albeit we deny any absolute infallibility in either, yet the possibility of not erring we acknowledge so much greater in the judge ecclesiastic, as his directory rule is more certain and authentical. But here I must request these great disputers of Rome, (if their phrensy come but by fits, and admit *lucida intervalla*,) one time or other, upon their good days, or in their sober hours, (if God send them any,) to bethink themselves well what manner of judge they require in matters civil or merely secular: such an one as cannot possibly err in judgment? one whom neither ignorance, lewd desires, nor exorbitant affections can cause to swerve, either from the undoubted rules of natural or civil equity, the fundamental laws of his country, or the chief lawgiver's true intent and meaning? If they willingly grant that our civil magistracy, which they acknowledge lawful and necessary in its kind, may sometimes judge wrongfully in causes by nature most determinable by ordinary course of civil justice; as for example, in condemning priests and Jesuits; or generally in matters of life and death: ^c with what foreheads can they demand we should believe the pope or other ecclesiastic judges cannot possibly give erroneous sentence in any

^c The utmost bounds of all Christian obedience unto any authority on earth, is only to abide a peaceable trial before the lawful judges, patiently to embrace the penalty inflicted: but not to think what penalties soever they

shall inflict, or the cause for which it is inflicted, to be just, or such as shall stand for good in the day of final judgment; for so earthly powers should have absolute authority over our souls, which is God's peculiar.

matters of religion, many of which are of that nature as can admit no other use of external or coercive power, save only severe restraint of all precise determinations, or curious search one way or other? and to admit, though in cases merely civil, such an absolute inerrable tribunal, from whose censure no man (though ready with patience to brook the execution of heaviest bodily doom it could inflict) may so much as in the secrets of his heart or conscience so far appeal, as to examine whether the determination be right or wrong; were either secretly to deny, or openly to preoccupate or prevent Christ's final judgment: wherein even supreme judges shall be judged, and all forepast decisions examined by the written word, (which these men disclaim for any authentic rule of faith;) the right approved, the wrong reversed by him, whose peculiar prerogative it is (though now usurped by the pope) to put a final end to all controversies *viva voce*.

4. Notwithstanding, be it supposed for disputation's sake, that God had appointed such an authentic tribunal (as these drunkards dream of) for deciding matters of religion; yet were it most gross to think (might reason alone without scripture be admitted judge) there should be but one supreme tribunal for the whole ³²³ Christian world. Even common sense (were reason silenced) might instruct us, that it were much more convenient for every several kingdom, every free state or society of men, to have such a consistory or supreme tribunal amongst themselves. For by this means might all differences in opinions be far sooner known, more narrowly sifted, and present notice taken of every circumstance concerning their occasions, progress, or favourers; the controversy itself quicker decided; the offenders more speedily punished; and the like occasions better avoided. Whereas, for every

nation to resort to Rome, or for the pope to send his legates into every corner of the Christian world, would procure great toil and long labour, with little success. The causers of contentions, or maintainers of heresies, might often die in their sins, before the controversy were examined, or the truth so manifested as might move them to repentance, or recantation of their errors; the information might be impertinent, partial, imperfect or false: the opinion, or supposed heresy, being (haply) first set abroad in the presumed heretic's country dialect, would be worse understood of the pope, whose instruction in many principal circumstances must oftentimes depend upon disagreeing hearsays; for his holiness sees no better; his infallibleness hears no further in matters *de facto* than meaner men; his plenary power, even while he gives sentence *ex cathedra*, is not able to understand more tongues than many linguists may in a meaner seat; his fatherhood understands none besides his mother-tongue, so well as the natural inhabitants of every country do their own proper native language. Many such inconveniences might be alleged, for which (might we choose what manner of ecclesiastic government God should appoint us) we should make choice of a supreme judge in all causes ecclesiastical at home, rather than go to Rome to have them heard^d. If the controversers were to go from Norway, the seas might be frozen, and enemies

^d Our adversaries grant that a provincial council confirmed by the pope is as authentic as a general, wherein he were present, though absent in the other, and not acquainted with particular circumstances or carriage of the controversy. Much more available should a pope's confirmation of such counsels be, who

were present and well acquainted with all occasions or other circumstances of the controversy, or the division. Wherefore if reason without scripture might decide this controversy, it were more convenient to have as many popes as several free states or monarchies.

possess the land. The passages from sundry other places might all be so stopped, as we should have greater controversy in going to Rome than that for which we were to go. Or if the election of men (for by man is the pope elected) could give such infallibility to any; the manner of such elections would be much more agreeable to the rules of God's providence, and the example of Christ's apostles, if all the congregation, which was to rely upon his infallibility, should first make choice of some few most excellent and famous men, renowned for learning and integrity; afterwards, all with one mind and one heart pray unto the Lord to shew by lot which was the man, to whom he would undoubtedly vouchsafe this infallible assistance of his Holy Spirit. Thus (might reason or common sense without scripture be judge what manner of government were fittest for Christ's church) we could bring far greater reasons for a multitude of popes or ecclesiastical monarchs, (for one at least in every nation,) than either our adversaries bring, or can be brought, for one general monarch over the universal church militant.

5. And albeit this challenged large extent of the³²⁴ Romish church's authority over others (were the authority itself otherwise for the quality moderate) had been in former times not altogether so unreasonable; yet were it at this day to be abandoned, as a turbulent device, apt for nothing so much as perpetual disturbance of public peace throughout Christendom, now divided into so many several sovereignties, and governed by so many absolute princes or states, no way dependent one of another. And Bellarmine's reasons, brought for to prove the monarchical government of the church, would with far greater probabilities infer a conveniency for a several monarchical government in every particular state, than for one general monarch over all. While

the Christian world was governed by one absolute monarch or emperor, and all the peculiar customs or privileges of several nations (like divers members of the same body) conformable one to another by their common subordination to one supreme imperial law, the virtue of a like ecclesiastical authority might have been equally diffused throughout the whole body thereof, as the splendour of the sun throughout the whole hemisphere of the air, and other ethereal and celestial bodies, all, though different in their particular natures and peculiar properties, uniform for the transmission of light. But after the dissolution of the Christian empire, and the constitution of several states and sovereignties throughout Europe, all complete within themselves, and different one from another in laws and customs; the transfusion of such an absolute ecclesiastic authority through all would be unequal, and make Christendom like a monster, compact of many several entire bodies made up in one, or like some ugly living creature, that had many heads, and but one heart or soul.

That the final Trial of this Controversy must be by Scriptures: that the Jesuits' and modern Papists' fierce oppugning all Certainty of private Spirits in discerning the Divine Truth of Scriptures, or their true Sense, hath made the Church their Mother utterly incapable of any Plea by Scriptures, for establishing her pretended Infallibility.

1. BUT what Christian heart could have suspected that any man, acknowledging the infinite majesty of an omnipotent God, filling every place with his presence, ruling all things by his power, and having every least creature of the world a world of witnesses of his inconceivable wisdom, and unspeakable providence over the works of his own hand, durst once have presumed

to think, much less have opened his mouth to utter, least of all have employed his pen to proclaim, such foul impiety to the world, as that a Power so infinite could not sufficiently provide for his church in deciding matters of faith, (surpassing all reach of reason,) unless he had ordained some one supreme tribunal seat on earth, the judges whereof should be but mortal men, whose bodies can be but in one place at once, whose voices cannot reach without the precincts of their consistories; whereas the law of this our God (unto whose sentence in matters of faith we appeal) is, or might be, (but for these our antiscipturian adversaries' importunity,) every where throughout the Christian world dispersed: and, besides the external helps of an ordinary ministry or magistracy, (alike common to all nations,) the Holy Spirit is every where assistant to all such as seek him in the written word by him revealed; whose live characters are as the prints or footsteps of his wonted motions in God's prophets' or apostles' hearts, by which the faithful may discern his approach or presence in their own. Nor will the Jesuits be so wilful (I hope) as to deny that this Holy Spirit, who did dictate the word to such as wrote it in these material tables, (having first written it in the fleshly tables of their hearts,) is able now also to write the same immediately in the hearts of all such as with fear and reverence prepare themselves for his fit and decent entertainment. That this was possible to be performed by the almighty wisdom of God, they would not (I know) deny, were this, in direct and plain terms, made the main controversy betwixt us. Albeit as much as we have charged them withal, will most necessarily follow from their absurd and lavishly blasphemous speeches, which in the heat of contention have distilled from their pens in this present controversy. But of

the possibility of God's immediate teaching every Christian heart, or rather of the probabilities which may induce all to rely immediately hereupon, we shall have occasion to discourse hereafter. Let us now, in sobriety of spirit, rather dispute of God's will than his power: as, whether there be any sure argument to persuade us, 326 that it was his intent or purpose, either to instruct men in the true sense of scriptures, or to take up all controversies in matters of faith, by this supposed infallibility of some visible church. All this, and somewhat more, our adversaries in this point seriously avouch and earnestly contend for. Let us therefore briefly see whether or no God's Spirit hath taught thus much. That the sense of scriptures cannot be had without the assistance or working of God's Spirit, both jointly acknowledge; "They must be understood and interpreted," saith Bellarmine^d, "by the same Spirit which wrote them;" as he very well gathers out of St. Peter^e. Whence likewise he well collects^f, that the

^d Convenit etiam inter nos et adversarios scripturas intelligi debere eo Spiritu quo factæ sunt, id est, Spiritu sancto. Quod apostolus Petrus Epist. 2. cap. i. docet cum ait: *Hoc primum intelligentes, quod omnis prophetia scripturæ propria interpretatione non sit. Non enim humana voluntate allata est aliquando prophetia, sed Spiritu sancto inspirati loquuti sunt sancti Dei homines.* Ubi B. Petrus probat non debere exponi scripturas ex proprio ingenio, sed secundum dictamen Spiritus sancti, quia non sunt scriptæ humano ingenio, sed ex inspiratione Spiritus sancti. Bell. lib. 3. de Verbo Dei, cap. 3.

^e 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

^f Tota igitur quæstio in eo posita est, ubi sit iste Spiritus.

Nos enim existimamus hunc Spiritum, etsi multis privatis hominibus sæpe conceditur, tamen certo inveniri in ecclesia, id est in concilio episcoporum confirmato a summo ecclesiæ totius pastore cum concilio aliorum pastorum. Bellarmin. *ibid.* In this place, as he professeth, he will not dispute, whether the pope alone, speaking *ex cathedra*, be the church; for that he was to dispute of afterwards, and he and all his fellows do and must acknowledge it, as shall in due place be shewed. That in this place he grants the communication of that Spirit (by which the scriptures were written) unto private men, doth not argue any agreement with us, but rather his disagreement from some of

whole difficulty in this question about taking up controversies, and finding out the true sense of scriptures, consists in this ; “ Where this Spirit is, and where the distressed soul and doubtful conscience ought to seek it.” In the visible and catholic church, saith Bellarmine, and all the modern Roman catholics ; that is, (as they interpret it,) in the consistory of the pope and cardinals, or in the assembly of bishops, or (as the modern Jesuits will have it) in the pope alone speaking *ex cathedra*.

3. Every man (say we) ought to seek the Spirit of God in his own soul and conscience, being directed and ruled by the sacred word, which was revealed and uttered by the same Spirit. This word directs them in this search, and the Spirit once found out, or rather finding them thus seeking him, establisheth their assent unto the word already revealed and written, by imprinting the same invisible word, or the true sense and meaning of it, in their hearts.

4. Why this Spirit should be infallibly present to the visible church, all our adversaries uncessantly urge scripture. I will not abuse the reader's patience with allegation of the places, which have been very fully answered by many of our church. That which I intend at this time is, first, to debar them by their own grounds of this plea of scriptures, by shewing their absurdity and folly in urging any scripture at all for the proof of their assertion ; and secondly, to overthrow the assertion itself by manifest proofs, that either their church's transcendent authority (as it is now taught) must fall, or Christianity cannot stand.

his own profession, who urge the necessity of the church's proposal so much and so far, that not God's prophets or other, to

whom his word was extraordinarily revealed, could without it be certain. Vide Bellar. lib. 3. de Justif. cap. 3.

To make way for our clearer passage in the former.

The papists' assertions whence the proposed conclusion is gathered.

5. They generally hold, that this infallibility of the visible church consists directly in this; that the Holy Ghost is infallibly present to it, and gives it the true sense and meaning of scriptures, which he doth not give to private persons; whom, in their judgments, he will not vouchsafe immediately to instruct; so that his dictates already revealed cannot be a rule unto them, 327 because they want his infallible assistance for their exposition; and for the same reason, certain they cannot be, without the church's authority, that they understand the scripture aright.

6. This their assertion being twofold, (for their church's infallible expositions, and against all private interpretations,) is grounded upon these two principles: They are to be believed in exposition of scriptures *fide divina*, whom the Holy Ghost infallibly assists; They are not so to be believed, whom the Holy Ghost doth not so assist. Whence what he said before will follow, that no man, besides the pope, may believe his own interpretations of scriptures; his, or the church's, all must; nay, all men must believe *fide divina*, that the church or pope is in all determinations infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost. For if we were not bound to believe their infallibility most infallibly, it could be no rule of faith, but might be rejected till we see it evidently proved; whereas they contend it should be the rule of faith unto all, and by their own confession "a main article of their creed;" but according to their positions, (as we shall hereafter prove,) the only article of Christian faith. How destitute these their assertions are of all grounds of reason or rules of nature, hath been made evident. There remain only two pillars possibly imaginable for supporting

this pretended infallibility, tradition and scripture. Against tradition, all the arguments they can heap against the certainty of scriptures stand good; as shall hereafter (God willing) be shewed. That no argument can be drawn from scripture to their succour, albeit the later Jesuits have earnestly sought to scrape a many, (for better than scrapings are not the very best they bring,) we are now to prove.

7. That our belief of scriptures' truth, and their true sense, (by what means soever we attain thereto,) must be infallible, both agree: the means that must infallibly ascertain or prove their Divine truth and true meaning unto us, (say our adversaries,) is the church's infallibility, which likewise must be infallibly believed; otherwise it could not be the rule of faith, or belief infallible. It shall suffice here (once for all) to admonish the reader, that as often as we mention belief of scriptures, or the church's infallibility, in this dispute, we mean not any kind of belief, but that only which is infallible; so likewise, whiles we mention the means or proofs of either, we understand only means or proofs infallible, whereon faith may immediately rely, as upon a rule most sure and certain. In all these we demand nothing but what our adversaries most willingly grant. From their grant we argue thus:

8. If either the scriptures can thus ascertain or prove the church's infallibility, or it the infallible truth of scriptures, to our souls; we must of necessity either believe the one of these before the other, [the church's infallibility before scriptures, or scriptures before it,] or both together without all priority of belief, or pre-existent knowledge of the one, whence the belief or knowledge of the other must spring. The members of the division are in the proposal actually two, but in

The general points of difficulty, how either the church can ascertain the Divine truth of scripture unto us, or the scripture the church's infallible authority.

the disquisition will prove three : to begin with the first.

328 9. If they say, We must believe the scriptures to be the word of God, before we can believe the infallibility of their church ; they overthrow their own, and establish our positions. For thus they make the scripture a rule of our faith, at the least, in this one article of the catholic church's infallibility ; which, by this assertion, we may and ought infallibly to believe, because the scriptures, which we first infallibly believe, do teach and prove it. Hence private men should be taught by the Holy Ghost, first to believe the truth of scriptures, and for it the church's infallibility. Wherefore the scripture must be the immediate rule of their belief in the article of the church's infallibility, which to them is the general rule of faith ; and so by consequence, the scriptures, which to us are only the rule of faith, must be more than so to them, even the rule of their rule of faith. But if the scriptures may be the immediate and infallible rule of their belief in the article of the church's infallibility, what reason possibly can be imagined, why they should not be the infallible and immediate rule of their faith, in all other parts or articles of their creed ? For I call heaven and earth, men and angels, to witness betwixt ours and the Romish church, whether the articles of Christ's incarnation, his death, his passion, his burial, his resurrection, his ascension, his intercession for us, the resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting, &c., be not to any man's capacity in the world, much more plainly set down in sundry places of scripture, than the infallibility of the present Romish church, in these words : *Peter, Feed my sheep : Peter, to thee I give the keys of heaven : Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church : It seemed good to the Holy Ghost*

What inconveniences will follow, if they admit the first member of the division proposed, that is, if they believe the scriptures infallibly before they can believe the church's infallibility so.

and us: or in any place her sons can challenge for it. Wherefore if the Holy Ghost teach us this article of the church's infallibility immediately, without the church's infallible authority, (which as we now suppose must be proved from the scriptures first infallibly believed,) then questionless he may and will immediately teach us the other articles of our creed, and whatsoever necessary to salvation, (which are more plainly and perspicuously set down in scriptures,) without the help or assistance of the church's infallible authority, which it is supposed to teach by places more doubtful.

10. Or if our adversaries will hold it no absurdity to say, that the Holy Ghost may teach us the true sense and meaning of the forementioned places of scripture, which seem to make for the infallibility of the Romish church, as *Petre pasce oves*, &c., immediately without the help or assistance of the church's infallibility, (which is here the lesson supposed to be taught,) and refers all other points of faith or matters of doctrine unto the church's teaching immediately; they are bound in reason to shew a scripture for this assertion. And besides, they must (perforce) make the same comparison betwixt the Holy Ghost's immediate teaching, and the church or pope's immediate teaching, which our Saviour Christ made^g between the Holy Ghost's extraordinary teaching, which was to ensue his glorification, and his own immediate teaching before his passion: and as soon as the Holy Ghost hath once taught us the meaning of these places, which make for the church's infallibility, that may be applied unto him in respect of the pope's supereminency in teaching, which our Saviour Christ spake of himself,³²⁹ and his own personal instructions in the days of his

^g John xvi. 7.

humility, in respect of that blessed Comforter's illuminations to be bestowed in abundant measure upon his apostles, immediately upon his ascension. For thus (by their assertions) that holy Comforter, after that lesson once taught, *Tu es Petrus*, should take his leave of faithful hearts in the same terms our Saviour there did of his disciples: *I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter* (that infallible teacher, on whose authority your souls must rest) *will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*^h; and again; *I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he is come that hath the Spirit of truth*, (your infallible teacher, whose tongue, while he speaks *ex cathedra*, I must attend,) *he will lead you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak: he shall glorify me; for he shall receive of me, and shew it unto you*ⁱ. These words (I say) might be taken as a typical prophecy of the pope's infallible authority, (such a prophecy of it I mean, as the history of the paschal lamb was of Christ's passion,) if they will hold the first member of the former division—That the Holy Ghost doth first teach us infallibly to believe these scriptures which they urge for the infallibility of their church, and having once made us infallibly to believe them, refers us to the church's infallibility (taught and believed by them) for the rule of faith in all other articles.

The inconveniences of the second member—If they should say they must infallibly believe

11. *Sed quia hac non successit, alia aggrediendum est via*; let us now see, whether they be like to find any better success, by following the second member of the forementioned division. (1.) If they should say, “We must infallibly believe the church's infallibility

^h John xvi. 17.

ⁱ Ver. 12, 13, 14.

in expounding scriptures, or points of faith, before we can infallibly believe them to be the word of God, or to contain in them doctrines of faith." This indeed they must say, if they hold their church's authority to be the rule of faith, or whereby infallibly to distinguish Divine truth from apocryphal.

the church's
infallibility,
before they
can so be-
lieve the
Divine
truth of
scriptures.

12. Let us first take the proposition supposed for disputation's sake; viz. "We must believe the church's infallible authority, before we can believe the scripture to be the infallible oracles of God." Secondly, let us consider but this one part of the church's infallible authority, which all the modern papists acknowledge, "That the scriptures cannot be known infallibly to be the word of God, but by the confirmation of the present church;" and let us see how these two assertions can stand together. By the first, the church's infallible authority must be infallibly believed before scriptures: by the second, (which contains the chief part of the church's infallibility,) the scriptures cannot be infallibly acknowledged, or believed to be the word of God, but upon former supposal of believing the church's infallibility confirming this truth unto us.

13. Here let all, whose brains are not intoxicate with the wine of fornication, pause a while, and contemplate what Babylonish giddiness hath possessed their brains, that have run round about so long, (though always staggering,) in urging scriptures for to prove that as an article of belief, which must be infallibly believed before those places of scriptures which they urge for it; or else, nor they nor any other scriptures can ever be steadfastly believed to be the word of God, 330 or to have sufficient authority in them to cause steadfast belief unto that which they teach. For this is the issue of all our adversaries' arguments in this point; That such matters as are contained in scriptures,

cannot be steadfastly acknowledged or believed for supernatural or Divine truths, until they be confirmed by this infallible authority of the present church. Where again I would have the reader call to mind, what was before observed out of Bellarmine's positions; that this infallibility of the church consists directly in this, that it is perpetually assisted by the Holy Ghost: and it is all one with them, to say, We believe the church's infallible authority in matters of faith, and to say, We believe the church is perpetually assisted by the Holy Ghost: again, (by all the later Jesuits' positions,) it is all one to say, We believe the church is perpetually assisted by the Holy Ghost in determining matters of faith, and to say, We believe that the pope, speaking *ex cathedra*, is assisted perpetually by the Holy Ghost in determining matters of faith.

14. Out of these assertions compared with the propositions supposed, "The church's infallibility must be believed before scripture, or other articles of faith," this will immediately and directly follow: We must believe that the Holy Ghost, the supreme Judge of scriptures and matters of faith, doth infallibly assist the church, or pope speaking *ex cathedra*, before we can believe that there is an Holy Ghost. For this is one article of faith taught in scriptures, which scriptures (say our adversaries) cannot be believed, but by the confirmation of the church's infallible authority, and this infallible authority consists (as we said before) in this, that it is infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost: wherefore the conclusion of this absurd position is, that we must first believe the Holy Ghost is perpetually resident in the pope's breast, or consistory of Rome, before it can be believed that there is an Holy Ghost, or Divine Trinity, in heaven. If we consider

the practice of our adversaries in urging scripture, to prove their church's infallibility to be the rule of faith; they should in reason admit the first member of the forementioned division, and hold that the scriptures must be infallibly believed for the word of God, before the infallibility of the church (which they seek to prove by scriptures) can be infallibly believed. But again, if we consider their assertions concerning the church's infallibility, "That the scriptures cannot be known to be the scriptures but by it, and that it is the rule of faith," they must of necessity admit the second member of the forecited division, and maintain, that the church's infallibility must infallibly be believed, before we can believe the scriptures to be the infallible oracles of God: for *regula semper est prior regulato*; but the church's infallibility is the rule of faith by their positions, and to believe the scripture to be the infallible oracles of God is a main point of faith, and necessary to salvation^k: for this is the Jesuits' principal topic, to disprove the scriptures' sufficiency for being the rule of faith in all points, because it containeth not this one point, viz. that the scriptures are the infallible oracles of God. It is hence evidently proved, that neither of the two first members of the former division can stand either with reason, the allegator's practice, or positions. For the first quite overthrows their positions concerning their church's infallible authority: the second proves their practice to be most absurd, in urging scriptures for to prove it: and yet the third member is of all the three the most absurd, albeit not so dissonant to their positions or practice in this point, because as are they, so is it, senseless both; which will evidently appear by the bare proposal of it.

15. The third member was, That we must infallibly

^k See Valentian cited cap. 22.

The gross
absurdities
of the third

member, as well in reason as in respect of their assertions :—If they should say they neither infallibly believe the scriptures before the church's infallibility, nor it before them.

believe the scriptures to be the oracles of God, and the church's infallibility both together, without any priority of time, order, or nature. First, if this assertion be true, then cannot the church's infallibility serve as a rule to know the scriptures to be the word of God infallibly, because *regula prior est regulato*. But by this assertion there is no priority in the church's infallibility, (their supposed rule,) in respect of our knowing or believing the scriptures to be the oracles of God. Secondly, if the former assertion be true, then neither can the scriptures prove the church's infallibility, nor the church's infallibility prove the scriptures to be the word of God unto any believer. For all means or arguments of proof suppose a priority in respect of the parties unto whom proof is to be made. And to say, that of two things, both believed and known together without any priority, the one might prove the other, were as much as if we should say, that a thing might prove itself, and as we say in schools, to prove *idem per idem*. For the very reason why we cannot prove *idem per idem* is, because there is no priority of knowledge in such identity: for otherwise, where the thing proving and the thing proved are indeed the selfsame, yet if there be a priority of conceits or notions in the same thing, one of them will sufficiently prove the other; as is evident in the Divine attributes, none of which are indeed really distinct from others, and yet may one of them prove another, because in respect of us, one of them is better known than another, and consequently being known may prove the other. But of such attributes as are neither better known than other, or where the terms are only diverse, without priority of conceit or knowledge, there can be no proving of the one by the other. For all discursive knowledge (such as is all knowledge by way

of proof or syllogism) must be *ex præexistente cognitione*: and where one thing is proved by another, that which proveth must first be believed; for the belief of the other must spring or arise from the belief of it. If a man should go about to prove that the prince was sumptuously arrayed, because he was sumptuously apparelled or attired, the proof would be ridiculous: seeing sumptuous apparel and sumptuous array, in common speech, are all one; and he that knows the one knows or believes the other. But if a man should say, the prince was sumptuously apparelled, because he wore a suit of tissue, or beset with pearl, the proof were good, so it could be proved that he wore such a suit. For it is sufficiently known to all, that such attire is sumptuous; and therefore he that can make proof that he was so attired, hath sufficiently proved that he was sumptuously arrayed. And thus, would our adversaries admit that either the scriptures were better known than the infallibility of the church, or the church's infallibility better known than they, the one of them might be brought to prove the other, without any fault in the manner or form of proof: 332 howsoever, their assertions in the proof of either would overthrow either their own positions, or the principles of faith, as appeareth in the two former parts of our division. But according to our supposition in the third member, to wit, That the church's infallibility, and the infallibility of scripture, are both alike known unto us, and neither believed before other; the very manner or form of proving one by the other would be as ridiculous and absurd, as if a man should prove costly apparel by sumptuous array; or that one was costly apparelled because he wore costly raiment.

16. The most of our adversaries, *loving* (in this point) *darkness more than light*, (like desperate debtors,

that keep strict reckoning what others owe them, but are afraid to take an account of the debts they owe,) never seek to examine the particular difficulties of their own opinions, but think it sufficient to cast stumbling-blocks before their feet that will not hoodwink themselves, that they may stand in need of leading by such blind guides as themselves. Yet Valentian, who had gone so far in searching the difficulties and dangers of this darksome, enchanted way, until he had come to see some lightnings of these objections here set down, at the first representation of them is so affrighted, as if he had seen a night-walker or hobgoblin, that had put him so far out of his right mind, as he neither dare go forwards, nor can he pray to God to bless him, or send him his Spirit to conduct him safely back; but runs round with the collier's catechism in his mouth, instead of a better charm. His resolution is thus: "That we may briefly collect the former large disputes concerning the resolution of faith, it shall not be amiss to set down a form of answering to such as demand a reason of our faith. If you be demanded (for example sake) why you believe a Trinity of Persons in one Godhead; first, distinguish whether the question be of your firm and infallible belief of this truth itself, or of the cause which moved you to embrace this belief. In the former case the answer must be, Because God hath revealed it: if it be demanded again, How you know that God hath revealed it? the answer must be, You know it not evidently, but yet believe so, by the same infallible faith by which you believed the truth revealed: and this not by another revelation, but by the church's infallible proposal of it, which is a condition necessary to such belief. If yet it be further questioned, How you know the church's proposal, or avouching of this revelation to be infallible? your

Valentian's attempted evasion out of the enchanted circle of Roman faith, refuted.

answer must be again, That distinctly and clearly you know not thus much, but yet believe it as infallibly as the former, and that for the revelation of the scripture, bearing testimony of the church's infallibility, which revelation you believe not by any other revelation, but for itself, although unto this very belief the church's proposal be required as a necessary condition¹."

17. It cannot choose but be a great motive to persuade any man (that doth not affect blindness in this point) of the shallow and unstable foundation of the 333 Romish church; when he shall thus behold so skilful an artificer as Valentian, in laying the very groundwork thereof, so gravelled in his own objections, that he fares like one that had fallen into a deep pit of loose sand, heaving and offering with might and main to get out and go forwards, but being destitute of all firm ground whereon to rest one part till the rest be raised, beats himself blind with too much struggling in such a sandy soil. For surely, from more than Egyptian or Sodomitish blindness did that attempted evasion of his in the forementioned place proceed. "Nor do we commit any circular fallacy in this form of answering: partly,

¹ Ut breviter quæ fusius disputata sunt de resolutione fidei, colligamus, placet modum tradere quo quis de fide interrogatus debeat respondere. Igitur si quis rogetur, v. g. Quare credat Deum esse trinum et unum? distinguat utrum viz. firmiter et infallibiliter id credat; vel de causa ob quam acceptaverat eam fidem. Si primum; respondeat, quia Deus revelavit. Si rursus interrogetur, unde cognoscat Deum revelasse? respondeat, se quidem non nosse id clare, credere tamen eadem fide infallibiliter, et id quidem non ob

aliam revelationem: bene tamen ob infallibilem propositionem ecclesiæ, tanquam ob conditionem ad id credendum requisitam. Si rursus, unde cognoscat propositionem ecclesiæ esse infallibilem? similiter dicat; se clare non nosse, credere tamen fide infallibili ob revelationem scripturæ, testimonium perhibentis ecclesiæ: cui revelationi non credit ob aliam revelationem, sed ob seipsam, quamvis ad hoc ipsum opus sit ecclesiæ propositione ut conditione requisita. Valent. tom. 3. in Aquinat. Disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 1. sect. 10.

because the revelation, for which the church's infallible proposal is believed, and the proposal for which the revelation is believed, have not one and the same, but each its several object. For the object of the church's proposal is the revelation, but the object of the revelation is the truth itself believed, as that there is one God and three Persons, or that the church's proposal is infallible: partly, because when we assign the revelation as a reason why we believe the church's proposal, we give the reason by the cause, (for the revelation is the cause of our assent or actual belief,) but when we assign the church's proposal as a reason why we believe the revelation, the reason is not assigned by the true cause of our belief, but by a condition requisite thereunto. And so this juggler's ring, or circular fallacy, is avoided, and only a reason is given of things connexed mutually from the things themselves connexed under a diverse reason or respect, which is no legerdemain, but fair play^m."

17. If the diverse objects of the Divine revelation, and the church's infallibility, were the only cause or reason why we take this resolution for circular proof, then this exception of the diversity of their objects were to some purpose. But we impeach this his reso-

^m Neque in sic respondendo erit aliquis vitiosus circulus. Tum quia revelatio propter quam dicitur credi infallibilitas propositionis; et propositio ob quam dicitur credi revelatio, non habent unum et idem objectum, sed aliud et aliud. Objectum enim propositionis est ipsa revelatio; objectum autem revelationis est ipsa veritas credita; ut Deum esse trinum et unum, aut propositionem ecclesiæ esse infallibilem. Tum quia, cum ex revelatione

redditur ratio credendi propositionem, redditur per causam (revelatio enim est causa assensus fidei;) cum autem ex propositione ecclesiæ redditur ratio credendi revelationem, ratio redditur non per causam credendi, sed per conditionem ad id requisitam; et ita vitatur vitiosus circulus et solum redditur ratio connexorum vicissim ex ipsis met connexis sub diversa ratione id quod omnino licet. Valent. *ibid.*

lution of naughtiness, for the very form or manner, because the proof is *idem per idem*. And being so, albeit the object of the Divine revelation and the church's proposal be diverse; yet is this no sufficient testimony to acquit it, unless they will affirm, that there can be no circular proof where the objects of the things mutually proved are diverse, which if they universally affirm, (as without an universal affirmation in this kind there can be no proof,) we shall as easily impeach this affirmation of open falsehood, as their form of argument of circular fallacy. For wheresoever any thing uncertain to us is inferred by another thing alike uncertain, and that other only proved by the former; there is a circular proof, albeit we should by this form of argument seek to prove one thing by another, whose object was quite contrary to the former. Nay, although we should prove the very diversity or contrariety of the objects in two several terms proposed, by this or the like circular form; yet were our proof naught, albeit this same diversity of objects might be proved by some other lawful form of argument. For the diversity or identity of objects in syllogistical terms, is merely accidental to the nature of circular proof, or inference of *idem per idem*.

18. To fit our adversaries with a familiar example, ³³⁴ every way parallel to their own resolution in this point, (if they will acknowledge their own Valentian's resolution for their own,) but more plain and easy to the capacity of the unlearned reader. Suppose some ambitious captain or courtier (for whose integrity no man of place would promise much) should bring unto our king, or some statesman in this land, some foreign prince's (as the renowned king of Denmark's) letters commendatory for his great sufficiency in good place in war or state; I would request but any ordinary reader

well to consider, what matter of resolution it would be, if with reverence I may suppose that either his majesty, or any statesman in this land, in the bestowing of any such place of worth as this supposed messenger would sue for, might thus resolve: Surely the king of Denmark is a renowned religious prince, and one that wisheth exceeding well unto our king and state, and whatsoever he should write in any man's commendations, for his advancement to such a place as this party makes suit for, I dare not once call in question, lest I should seem to disparage his princely word: but how shall I know that these are his letters, and no counterfeit? If thus he should doubt, and yet finally rest content with this or like suggestion; Why, doth not he say they are his true letters, whose fidelity and integrity the king in his letters commends? No man in the world (I think) of any ordinary experience, although he had never traversed the schools to know the meaning of a circular proof, but could perceive this resolution to be but *dolus circulatorius*: and he that would be cozened with this or the like, by any traveller of what fashion soever, may easily be circumvented by any domestic pedlar, or circumforaneal copesmate. Yet is this resolution in every point the selfsame with Valentian's resolution, concerning the Roman church's infallibility; and the exception which here he brings, why this resolution of his is none, may altogether as directly and fitly be brought to shew, that this supposed resolution is no circular resolution. First, let us parallel the several parts of both resolutions. In that resolution of faith which Valentian brings, all Christians believe that whatsoever God saith is true; and so in this other resolution it is supposed that his majesty, or any of his statesmen, firmly believes, that whatsoever the king of Denmark writes or avoucheth

in matters of this nature (as of civil integrity and sufficiency for the discharge of such an office) is altogether true, and may not be suspected; yet may they suspect whether he wrote thus much in this man's commendations, as these letters import, or no. And so saith Valentian, and other papists, All Christians may suspect (certain they cannot be) whether God wrote those books which we call *scripture*, or no. The assurance which Christians in matters concerning faith, and statesmen in this present case, could have for their security, is altogether the same. For the statesman hath no other reason to persuade himself that these are the king of Denmark's letters, but only the report, asseveration, or testimony of this messenger, whose preferment they concern. And so likewise by the papists' positions, no private Christian can have any other certain assurance, that these scriptures are the word of God, but only the testimony or confirmation of the present Romish church, whose state and dignity 335 they likewise seek to maintain by countenance of the scriptures, whose misinterpretation did either first occasion, or not hinder, her rising to that height of temporal dignity which she now enjoys. Thus finally it appears, that all the reason or ground of belief which any papist following the Jesuits for their instructors can have, must be the infallibility of the Romish church; whose infallibility therefore cannot be proved out of scripture, because the scriptures by their positions cannot be infallibly proved to be scriptures, or that authentic word which only can afford sure proof in matters of faith, but by this their church's supposed authority. As for Valentian's exception, concerning the diverse object of the church's proposal, and the Divine revelations by it proposed, the selfsame diver-

sity of object may be observed in the former instance of the counterfeit messenger, whose resolution in effect is thus: You must believe these letters, because I commend them unto you in the king of Denmark's name, and you must believe me in commending them unto you, because the king of Denmark, whose words you trust in them, commends my trust and fidelity. To apply Valentian's exception to this resolution: As the object of that the church proposeth, or rather of the church's proposal, is the Divine revelation; so likewise is the object of this counterfeit's proposal the often mentioned king's supposed commendation of him. Again, as the object of the Divine revelation is the truth believed, (*Veritas credita, ut Deum esse trinum et unum, aut propositionem ecclesiæ esse infallibilem*; "as that there is a trinity in the Godhead, or, the church's proposal is infallible;") so likewise the object of the king's commendation in the other instance is the truth believed, or that at least which this counterfeit exacts to be believed as true, to wit, that he himself is a man of excellent parts, and one that will use fidelity as well in his doings as sayings, and, in a word, one whose proposal in matters of state or war is as infallible as the pope's in matters of faith. Yet notwithstanding that this counterfeit's proposal or asseveration, which must be believed from the prince's commendation of him, which must be believed again from his proposal, *non habent unum et idem objectum, sed aliud et aliud*, "have not one and the same object;" yet is the former resolution still ridiculous; and so is Valentian's resolution of his catholic faith most ridiculously impious: for what other issue of such dissolute resolutions can be expected, but that men who know no better should hereby be driven to suspect the scriptures for

counterfeit, and the catholic church (if the Roman were only the catholic church) of villainous forgery, at the least in those places of scripture which she pretends for proof of her own infallibility.

19. As for Valentian's latter exception, why his resolution should not be circular, it is more ridiculous than the former; most ridiculously false (to omit other points) in this one, that he dare deny the church's proposal by their doctrine to be the cause why we believe the Divine revelation, or rather, that these scriptures which we have are Divine revelations. For by their positions we cannot assure ourselves that the scriptures are the word of God, by any other cause or reason besides the church's authority: and therefore by their doctrine, the infallible authority of their church is the only cause why we believe this sacred canon of scriptures, which we enjoy, to be Divine revelations, although it be no cause by their doctrine why we believe that in general Divine revelations are true. For this is a dictate of nature, not controverted betwixt us and them, or betwixt any who acknowledge a Divine power. And Valentian himself directly implies that which he impudently denies in the self-same period. For he granteth, that *propositio ecclesiæ est ratio credendi divinam revelationem*; and *ratio credendi*ⁿ, the reason or rule of believing, must needs include in it a precedent cause of belief, it cannot be only a condition annexed thereto: but of this point (God willing) hereafter.

20. Sacroboscus (who hath followed Bellarmine's and Valentian's footsteps as faithfully as any Irish foot-
Sacroboscus entangled in the

ⁿ In matters of knowledge or belief, reason and cause are synonymal, and every cause in nature goes before the effect. And even when we demonstrate the cause by its proper effect, the

effect must needs be first known to us, seeing it is the reason or cause of our knowing the cause, though no cause of the real cause itself.

former circle, and caught in his own snare.

man could his master, though sometimes taking a more compendious and smother way, likely to entice *pedestria ingenia*, wits either by nature dull, or novices in arts, and smatterers in school-learning, to follow him, sooner than those great ones) hath taken upon him to answer to this circle in effect as Valentian doth, save only that he hath put more tricks of art upon it, either to confound the judicious, or deceive the simple reader. Which here we shall not need to examine, because we purpose to unriddle his mystical evasions in the next dispute. In the end of his tract in defence of Bellarmine, he frames his objection against both Valentian and his own resolution: "Whether, in believing the church by scriptures, and scriptures by the church, the belief of the one must in nature (if not in time) go before the other^o." He thinks it not necessary that

^o Sed quæris num quando quis credit aliquid propter auctoritatem ecclesiæ, necessarium sit prius tempore vel saltem natura, formaliter, et explicite credat ipsam ecclesiam esse infallibilis auctoritatis, quemadmodum quando assentimur conclusioni propter præmissas, necesse est ut prius assentiamur ipsis præmissis. Respondeo, id minime esse necessarium: nam actus fidei fertur in suum objectum, modo simplici, ut visus in suum: itaque sicut visus per speciem albi, (v. g.) videt album, non videndo ipsam speciem, sic potest quis per ecclesiæ auctoritatem credere, ita ut non prius formaliter et explicite credat ecclesiæ auctoritatem. Christophorus a Sacrobosco Dublinensis e societ. Jesu, p. 138, 139. A good examiner may know this fellow to be a Jesuit by his answer, so full stuffed with mental reservations, secret

evasions, and ambiguities. First, he will not resolve us whether men ordinarily must believe the church before scriptures: but a man may believe the scriptures, although he do not first believe the church *explicitè* or formally. And in the very next words he impertinently adds, that believing the scriptures, we cannot but *implicitè* and virtually believe the church. Which argues that the scriptures must be believed before the church. But say, we could not believe the one, but we must upon equal terms believe the other, this proves that neither could be any infallible or effectual means of believing the other. For there is no man that knows twice four make eight, but knows as well twice two make four, yet is neither a means of knowing the other, for both are immediately known of themselves. This shews the impertinency of their answer

the one should be before the other, *Nam actus fidei fertur in suum objectum modo simplici, ut visus in suum*. And therefore, as we see colours *per species visibiles*, by the visible shapes, or resemblances which flow from them, not by seeing the visible shape before the colours; so do we believe the scriptures by the church, albeit we do not expressly and formally believe the church before we believe the scriptures: *Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo?* In the former part of this his discourse, the visible church was unto scriptures as the light was unto colours^p; now it is unto scriptures, as visible shapes are unto colours.³³⁷ What then? Do we not see visible shapes before colours, nor colours before them? No. For we see no visible shapes at all, but by them colours only are brought into our sight; and we cannot see one before the other, if the one we see not at all. And in like sense it were true, that we should not believe the church before scriptures, nor scriptures before we believe the church, if we were not bound to believe the one at all. But if we see one thing by another which we likewise see, we must needs see that first by which we see the other: and so, if either we believe the scriptures by believing the church, or believe the church by believing scriptures, we must of necessity believe the one before the other. For that by which we believe a thing is the means of belief, and the means of belief must needs in nature and order go before belief itself.

that mutter they know not what, as if the knowledge of points of faith did resemble *habitus principiorum*, rather than *habitus conclusionis*. If so they do, then cannot the church's infallibility, being by their positions a point of faith, be any means of know-

ing the scriptures to be Divine, which is a main point of faith.

^p This comparison indeed is most consonant to their positions; but, as we shall afterwards prove, doth as clearly bewray the mystery of their iniquity, as the sun doth colours.

And if the church be the means of believing only inasmuch as we believe it; or, to speak more distinctly, if the believing the church be the very means of believing the scriptures; then must we needs believe the church before we believe the scriptures. If our adversaries affirm, that their church is the only infallible means of believing scriptures, in any other sort than by believing it; let them in the name of God assign by what means they will she can make us believe the scriptures, we shall not much contend; so they will not bind us to believe this their church's decisions. Sacroboscus his comparison of the visible church and visible shapes, we admit thus far for good; that as unless there were such visible shapes, no colours could be seen; so likewise, unless God had some visible church on earth, men ordinarily could not see the light of the gospel^p. For it is not ordinarily communicated to any but by the ministry of others, but being communicated, we believe it in itself, and for itself, not by believing others; as we see colours in themselves and for themselves, not by seeing the visible shapes by which they are presented or communicated unto our eyes. But whether there be any propriety between the belief of these two, (church and scriptures,) according to our adversaries' doctrine, or whether the belief of the one be the cause of the belief of the other, or in what sort the cause, and what inconveniences will follow thereon, we shall dispute hereafter.

^q This instance of his doth very well illustrate our former assertion, (chap. 12.) concerning the use of an ordinary magistracy or ministry. And the visible church may be said in such sense infallible as the shapes and resemblances of colours are called visible, being indeed by nature invisible, and are visible only by external demonstration, inasmuch

as they present colours to our sight, which only are truly visible. Were they really visible, themselves being received into our eyes, they would hinder our sight of all colours: so doth this admission of a real infallibility in the church, exclude all infallible belief of other points of faith.

21. Let them in the meantime illustrate the manner how we believe scriptures by the church as they please. Let it have the same proportion to scriptures, which the light, or visible shapes, have unto colours: they themselves make the belief of scriptures most uncertain, and for this reason seek to establish the infallibility of their church for to assure us of the truth of scriptures. We demand how this certainty of their church's infallibility can possibly be proved? By reason? That is impossible, as you heard before. By tradition? Of whom? of such as may err? That is^r un- 338 certain. Of the infallible church? But her infallibility is called in question, and any church may challenge this prerogative as well as theirs, unless they can shew a better title. Without revelation from above, it is still uncertain, *fide divina*, whether we are to believe any church's infallibility concerning scripture: or if any, which of all. Revelations from above we acknowledge none but the written word; they acknowledge traditions as well as it, yet so as the scriptures (by their confession) are as certain as tradition, which they make equal only with the written word acknowledged by us, not above it. Wherefore, if the scriptures be in themselves (by their objections) uncertain, then is tradition as uncertain. What shall assure us of the truth of either? The infallible church? But this can assure no man, unless he first believe it for certain

^r Iisdem fere argumentis efficitur, neque solam traditionem vivæ vocis eorum qui olim vita defuncti sunt, esse judicem sufficientem fidei, quæ valeat per se sine alia aliqua infallibili ac præsentente autoritate omnes omnino definire fidei quæstiones. Nam primum, sicut de autoritate ipsius scripturæ necesse est per aliquam aliam certam auctoritatem constare; ita etiam de au-

thoritate traditionis, si ea quoque revocetur in dubium. Non enim traditio loquitur etiam ipsa clare et perspicue de sese; ut neque ipsa scriptura. Deinde, cum traditio scriptis fere doctorum orthodoxorum in ecclesia conservetur, quæstiones ac dubia moveri possunt desensu illius, sicut dubitatur sæpe de sensu et mentedoc-
torum. Valent, t. 3. Disp. 1. qu. 1. de objecto fidei, punct. 7. s. 12.

and infallibly. What shall make it certain to us? The scriptures? But they are uncertain, say our adversaries, and the church must confirm their certainty unto us. Though this circle (wherein Valentian and Sacroboscus have run giddy) were of force to raise up all the spirits in hell, and though they raised should sift all the Jesuits' brains in the world; yet should not all the invention of man, with the help of devils, be able to find out the least probability of avoiding the former inconvenience. Nay, they should far sooner make ropes of the sand in the Adriatic sea, so strong as would hale Italy unto the islands of devils, before they could teach all the Jesuits in the world so much geometry, as to make one of these uncertainties support another.

The Unsufficiency of the Roman Rule of Faith, for effecting what it aims at, albeit we grant all they demand: the ridiculous Use thereof amongst such as do acknowledge it.

1. *WHEN I was a child*, (as our apostle saith,) *and spake as a child, understood as a child*, I thought some great matters might be contained under those hyperbolical and swelling titles of the Romish church, wherewith mine ears were often filled. And although I had been instructed to the contrary, yet could I have wished her doctrine true, such was my affection to her shape, as it was falsely represented to my childish phantasy. But after the day-star had shined in mine heart, the former humour wherewith the eyesight of my infant mind had been corrupted, was quickly dispelled. Once able to look more narrowly into the subtillest of her schoolmen's disputes, and examine her learned clerks' apologies for her by the gospel's light, I saw clearly, how by presenting mere shows or shadows of truth, they led weak-sighted souls into error, as it were

in a mist ; in the beginning of their works usually inserting pretended grounds (here and there as they espy occasion) of their intended conclusions, supported with some slight reasons for the present ; feeding us with expectation of better proofs, either in some other work, or (a great way after) in the same, which may stay our minds till we come at them, where they return us back again to what is past, and that being now far off, and most particulars out of mind, may seem not altogether nothing to such as will not take pains to review it. And thus in fine, as the mist, so their proofs seem every where somewhat, till a man come near them, but then so vanish as he shall see nothing of that he looked for.

2. Bellarmine's books *de Verbo Dei*, compared with those others of his *de Romano Pontifice*, &c. and Valentinian's *Analysis Fidei*, will easily approve this observation to him that will read them through with attention. Both of them in the beginning of their works promising great matters, made me expect some extraordinary proof in the process ; but finding them best at the first, always ambitious in producing multitude of allegations to little purpose, copious in bestowing glorious titles and prerogatives upon their holy church, and yet finally contracting her universality and sacred catholicship into one man's breast, (who by their own confession may be so carnally gross, that he cannot draw any spiritual breath,) their former goodly encomiums ending thus, made me call to mind how crafty companions cozen children of what they love, or stay their crying at what they dislike, by promising them some gallant, fine, gaudy, trim, goodly, brave, golden, new, nothing. Such brave epithets so ravish a child's thoughts, as at the first hearing he parts with any thing he hath, or forbears to seek what otherwise he would have, in hope of such a gay reward, never looking into

the substance of what is promised, which was indeed
 340 just nothing. With like bombast outsides do modern
 priests and Jesuits terrify silly souls (men or women,
 mere children in understanding) from all communion
 with our church, leading them through such painted
 forefronts, or feigned but sightly entrances, into their
 vast imaginary empty paradise, wherein grows nothing
 but forbidden fruit. Though volumes they write huge
 and large, and in the sublimity of their speculative
 imaginations fetch arguments from beyond the moon;
 yet unto him that hath but the eye of ordinary
 reason in his head, (not blinded by their jugglings,)
 their best collections prove in the end but like the
 drawing of a net spread far and wide in the open
 air, able to retain nothing of what it had compassed;
 only such as looked afar off, or had brains so weak, or
 sight so ill disposed, as could not distinguish betwixt
 the element of air and water, making more than an or-
 dinary stir in fetching so huge a draught, might hap-
 pily suspect some goodly catch.

Though we
 did not
 doubt of
 what the
 pope speaks
ex cathedra;
 yet is it
 doubtful
 what he
 speaketh
ex cathedra,
 and when
 he speaketh
 so.

3. Suppose we should grant that the pope whiles he
 speaks *ex cathedra* cannot err; who shall (I am sure
 no Jesuit or private spirit can) without all ambiguity
 and pretence of gainsaying determine directly and ab-
 solutely what it is to speak *ex cathedra*? And it is not
 to be expected that the pope will *ex cathedra* define
 what it is to define a thing *ex cathedra*, in such sort
 as shall leave no evasion to excuse his error, if he
 should be urged with a sentence *ex cathedra*; which
 to the major part of professed Christians might seem
 doubtful whether it were palpably erroneous or no.
 But suppose we knew directly and authentically what
 it were to speak *ex cathedra*, and when the pope did
 indeed so speak, when not; (which no man can know
 but only by hearsay, unless such as hear him give sen-

Albeit we
 knew what
 it were to

tence;) yet what assurance can the Jesuits give unto the Christian world, that his holiness shall so determine or speak, as often as the peace of Christ's church or weal of Christendom shall require? That he shall speak *de facto ex cathedra*, whensoever the church stands in need of a decision, the papists themselves do not hold as any part of his infallibility. but only that he is able so to speak when his infallibility will. And *a posse ad esse non sequitur argumentum*. No man, in their judgment, can or ought constrain him to a decision, except he list. And seeing they affirm he may be an heretic, or a son of Satan; although it were true, he could not propose an heresy to be believed, yet is there no show of truth why he may not be so maliciously bent, as he will not vouchsafe actually to determine that for heresy in others, which in his judgment, as he is a doctor or private man, is very orthodoxal; thus doing he should go against his own conscience to give sentence. God's Spirit, as they say, will guide his tongue when or whilst he speaks *ex cathedra*. But an evil spirit may so work upon his affections, that he shall not come in good time so to speak, especially against that opinion, which in his private conscience he holds for true. This I think none of them can deny.

4. Now whilst these doubts stand unsatisfied, and ye without further assurance of his infallibility in deciding controversies, then only this hypothetical or conditional, (if he speaks *ex cathedra*,) all the comfort which the Christian world (perplexed with the variety of opinions and diversities of sects) can reap from these fair promises of the Jesuits concerning their church or pope's infallible authority, is but as if a man should say unto a husbandman, (doubtful upon the uncertainty of the weather when to sow or reap,) Tush, be of good

cheer, you shall certainly know what season is good, what not, for seed-time and harvest, when the man in the moon sets forth an almanack : *Veritas hypotheticæ propositionis*, (saith old Javel,) *nihil ponit in crumena*. Many die with fewer pounds in their purses than arguments in their heads, sufficient to prove the truth of this conditional proposition. If I had five thousand pounds, I should be a wealthy man. In like manner, if this be all the assurance their infallible rule can afford us, That a general council, if lawfully assembled, or the pope, if he speak *ex cathedra*, cannot possibly err ; the most pestiferous and noisome heresies that now infect the church may (perhaps) be quelled, some hundred years after all now alive be dead. When the pope will call a council, or consult his chair, God knows : what manner of resolutions were to be expected, if either should happen, we may conjecture by their wonted practice ; which is thus :

5. After a council is called, the major part being made to serve their maker's turn, (for of bishops the most must be the pope's new creatures,) the rest must subscribe to their decrees, usually set forth in the weather wizard's language, and their sceptic schoolmen appointed to riddle out some good meaning that may salve their prelates' credit. In the meantime, the pope and his cardinals may follow their pleasures, take their ease, and with it the dreaming captain's motto, *Tot urbes capio dormiens ac vigilans* ; We take up as many controversies, we edify the church as much, sleeping as waking. If no tolerable interpretation of their doubtful decisions can be found, yet a good sense must be believed ; and private spirits may not peremptorily avouch that the council meant this or that, but only it meant the best, and this we take to be the best, and therefore we think it meant thus, but with humble submission to

The politic
sophisms of
the papists
in their
councils.

their infallible authority. All this while the sectaries (so they term us) must be set to prove negatives, as, that there can be no true meaning in those speeches which may have twenty. But if out of their schoolmen's wranglings (who can better seek out than follow the truth found) any interpretation or manner of tenet can be found which may yield advantage to them, or prejudice to their adversaries; about some hundred years after, perhaps, (when they have light on a pope and cardinals, whose wits and they once in their lifetimes meet,) a decision may be had upon this opportunity of seeming advantage. And yet the catholic church, during this hundred, or perhaps two hundred years of her silence, must be supposed to have held perpetually the selfsame tenet which this private man hath bolted out of late; albeit neither he nor any particular member thereof did know as much, yea though five heads of the church, (and as many principal members,) five successions of popes, cardinals, and bishops, have died in the meantime, no one of which in all their lives did trouble their thoughts with any such matter; and whilst both their schoolmen's private speculations and their public practice have witnessed the contrary. Was the doctrine of justification and merits held by any of their doctors heretofore, as the latter Jesuits have refined them? Did any of their popes and coun-342
cils determine of their manner of worshipping images, as Vasquez hath of late? And yet, I think, if the pope should be driven to a decision of this question, he would define as Vasquez hath done; so extraordinary is the approbation of his apology for imagery, as if it likewise were worthy of adoration. And if this pope should so determine it, you must think that all his predecessors were of the same opinion, if they had been asked, *eundem sensum tenuit semper ecclesia*?

6. But what is most strange, that church may for five, six, or twelve hundred years and more, use a translation justly suspicious, as for many other reasons, so for this, that of the divers authors thereof, some we know not, others we know too well : and yet, when a council after so long time shall meet, every man's work found very authentic. Some learned papists have been persuaded, that their vulgar translators were *docti a Deo omnes*, all assisted by the Holy Ghost in their translations^s. But Bellarmine thinks this opinion too charitable, for so they must grant that Theodotion the heretic, (the undoubted author of some parts of that edition,) was infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost. If he were not, how is that part of their vulgar which they have from him authentic and true? Though err he might, as being a private man, or rather a public heretic, *dicimus tamen eum non errasse in ea translatione quam approbavit ecclesia*; "yet we say," saith Bellarmine, but I hope no wise man will so think, "that he did not err in that translation which the church hath approved." I see then it is all one whether the Holy Ghost do assist the translator whilst he is about his work, or the pope his translation after it be finished and he dead ; nor doth it skill how he were qualified whilst he lived, either for integrity, wit, or learning : the cause is all one as in the pope himself, who may as freely bestow this particular gift, of not erring in translations, upon whom he please without all respect of good qualities, as St. Peter did that transcendent

^s Ad illud autem quod objiciebatur, interpretes interdum labi potuisse, non desunt qui respondeant, veterem interpretem novi Testamenti et etiam beatum Hieronymum interpretem veteris Testamenti, peculiari Spiritus sancti lumine illustratos, errare

non potuisse ; sed non est opus eo confugere. Admittimus enim interpretem non esse prophetam, et errare potuisse, tamen dicimus, eum non errasse in illa versione quam ecclesia approbavit. Bell. lib. 2. de Verbo Dei, cap. 11.

donative of absolute infallibility upon him and his successors. St. Jerome's translation had laudable testimonies of antiquity, yet not generally received in his time, only prejudiced by the newness of it, and antiquity of the Italic. But whose is the vulgar, or how first came it in request? "It is," saith Bellarmine, "partly Lucian's, partly Jerome's, partly Theodotion's the heretic, partly another's he knows not whose^t." Do we think the Trent council did examine every part of that translation? or did they know as much as Bellarmine hath confessed, that it should call so many fathers, and one heretic amongst the rest? Doubtless this is a miraculous power of their holy church; that the Holy Ghost doth but keep men from error whilst they are living, but the pope and his council's infallibility can keep an heretic (whom they knew not living) from having erred after he is dead. And whereas the³⁴³ Almighty Creator of heaven and earth did but make light shine out of darkness, the incomprehensible omnipotence of the pope's infallibility can make darkness light, and light darkness. For otherwise, why might not the pope and the council have yielded the assurance

^t Nam vulgata editio non est unius authoris, sed quædam habet ex Hieronymo, quædam ex Luciano, quædam ex Theodotione, quædam ex alio quodam interprete innominato: stultum autem videtur dicere, Theodotionem hæreticum non potuisse errare, et etiam Hieronymum nusquam errasse, cum ipse in cap. 19. Isaïæ dicat se errasse, et ecclesia correctionem ejus receperit. Non igitur authores illos canonizavit ecclesia, sed tantum hanc versionem approbavit, nec ita tamen approbavit ut asseruerit nullos in ea librariorum errores

reperiri, sed certos nos reddere voluit in iis præsertim, quæ ad fidem et mores pertinent, nulla esse in hac versione interpretum errata. Bell. *ibid.* Why the Romish church from Gregory's time until the Trent council should use the translations of so many sundry authors, no cause can be given save only the negligence or mishap of former ages that had lost all choice of better, or the necessity of the middle ages or times of midnight darkness, wherein the skill of interpretation was extinct.

of their omnipotent spirit unto some then living, for authentic translation? Or why did they not admit Franc. Forerius'^t correction of the Vulgar for authentic, seeing his skill in the Hebrew and good-will to the old Vulgar was so great? The reason sure, why they would admit of this hodgepodge translation before any better, was, (as I have said,) to shew hereby the pope's infallibility to be more than most omnipotent and incomprehensible. They contend for the Vulgar under the title of Hierom; and yet where it is evident that Hierom did not translate the Psalms which they use, they will not admit that translation of them which is every where extant, and without controversy is Hierom's own.

7. Yet thus much I perceive by Bellarmine's answer, that as a heretic or unknown author may err in a translation, because he is not infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost; but yet it must be believed, that a heretic did not err in that translation which the pope and council hath approved: so a Jesuit may perhaps commit a murder, because his order is not so holy as can warrant him from falling into mortal sin; but if it should please the pope or clergy of Rome to interpret the sixth commandment otherwise, we must believe that no Jesuit doth commit any murder in that manslaughter or bloodshed which the church approves,

^t This commentator having said as much as possibly could be said in defence of the Vulgar translation, altering the Hebrew vowels for this purpose at his pleasure; yet it seemeth the errors discovered in it by him in his comment upon Esay, hath hindered the setting forth of his other commentaries upon the prophets, which for his part he had finished, (as appears by the latter part of his *Épistle* to the

Trent fathers,) so the church would have approved them. *Quamobrem, si nostram operam vobis, sanctissimi patres, probari intellexero, reliquos libros quos habeo jam absolutos, propediem foras dabo: sin minus, vestro judicio admonitus recondam: mihi que satis erit, meum studium erga Christi ecclesiam atque hoc sanctissimum concilium semel esse testatum.* [Prefixt to his version of *Isaiah*.]

albeit he treacherously stab his sovereign lord the Lord's anointed. If it please the pope, he may ante-date his pardon, or legitimate such hellish brood, ere it come to light, as well as authenticate an heretic's translation a thousand years after his bones be rotten. These are the sweet fruits of this supposed infallible rule of faith and manners; but of the villainies included in this position, hereafter. I now only give the reader notice of the ridiculous use of the same amongst themselves: for what a sweet decision was that concerning grace and freewill, but lately so eagerly controverted in Spain, to the public scandal of that church^u. First, silence was enjoined all for four years, and afterwards Vasquez set (as a brach) to hunt a prey for the Romish lion to take, if he could have roused any to his liking. Is this the use of your infallible rule? Should Christians trouble the Turk with their contentions, he could decide as well on this fashion as the pope. The Moscovite^x already hath far surpassed him in this kind of composing, or rather avoiding contro-³⁴⁴versies. For he not many years ago (how affected now, I cannot tell) would have no preaching in his dominions, lest schisms and heresies might thereby be occasioned.

8. Were not the consequences of this opinion so

^u Vide Vasquez præfatione in primum tomum Comment. in D. Th.

^x Sacrum sive missa Slavonica lingua apud illos peragitur, intermixtis etiam aliquando cantionibus Græcis. Epistolæ, et Evangelium, quo magis a populo percipiuntur, extra chorum in medio ecclesiæ astanti populo clara voce recitantur. Concionatoribus carent, satis enim esse putant sacris interfuisse, ac E-

vangelii Epistolarumque verba, quæ vernacula lingua recitat sacrificulus, audivisse. Concionarique in suis ecclesiis obstinatissime prohibent, dicunt enim se hoc modo varias hæreses, et diversas de fide opiniones effugere quæ ex concionibus et subtilibus argumentis sophisticisque quæstionibus oriuntur. Alex. Gwagninus Veronensis in Muscoviæ descriptione, c. 2.

commodious to the Roman clergy for matters of this life, and so prejudicial to all other good Christians' hopes of attaining that other far better life, I should have thought that Valentian, Bellarmine, and other such as have been most copious in this argument, had but sought to set out *commentum aliquod artificiose ridiculum*, some artificial foolery, to make the world sport. For what better merriment could an ingenious student wish, than in his hours of recreation to descant upon their serious pains in setting a show of gravity upon idle, foolish arguments, as uncapable of theological, as an ape of tragic attire? But why should we consort with hell, which no doubt makes itself merry at these great disputers' folly, thus unwittingly employed to purchase the miserable solace of infernal powers by their own eternal sorrow, without repentance? As the opinion itself is most ridiculous to any impartial judgment, so even for this reason is the consequence most lamentable to any endued with human affection. For what greater or more just occasion of most grievous sorrow could be presented to a religious true English heart, than to see so great a part of the Christian world, especially so many of his native countrymen, (for such ridiculous apish impostures and false pretences of bringing God's people under such a government in matters of faith, as is usually in secular states,) increase old Israel's rebellion, and incur their grievous curse not yet expired, by casting off their Redeemer, the Wisdom of God, and Judge of quick and dead, from being their King, or supreme Judge of controversies in religion? For why should it seem uncouth unto any Christian, that Christ himself, though sitting in his throne of majesty in heaven, should be the only supreme infallible Judge in all controversies, concerning his own or his apostles' precepts, or God's

laws in general? For who could justly except against us, if we should say, That to most physicians through Europe, Hippocrates or Galen, to lawyers Justinian, were the sole authentic judge? No physician in any other country exacts subscription to his opinions of any living in this, further than upon examination they shall prove consonant either to Galen or Hippocrates, or be evidently grounded on reason. Or do we exclude all use or certainty of juridical decisions in matters of right and wrong, though the judges be but ordinary, because lawyers have no authentic living judge to determine, infallibly, of such controversies as may arise amongst themselves in speculative points of their profession?

9. It is supposed that good students in any faculty have wit and art, with other good means for finding out their classic author's sentence already given, whose writings in this respect may be truly said to be their followers' judges, though every one of them be a private judge in matters of practice: yet is it a paradox in us to say, God's written word is the judge of such controversies as arise amongst professed divines, or ecclesiastic judges themselves? What if all of them do not agree about the true sense and meaning of that word whereto all appeal? No more do physicians 345 always in their interpretations of Hippocrates or Galen, yet have not their disagreements (for ought I have read) bred civil wars in the countries wherein they live, nor doth their variance bring any danger to wise men's bodies, but rather all dangers are by this means discovered, and safer choice left others what opinions or prescripts to follow or refuse, or in what cases it is most safe or dangerous to adventure. Thus might divines dispute without any danger to men's souls, if the Romanists had not been so lavish in coining matter for contention, rather than in searching

In what sense the scriptures may be truly said the supreme judge of all controversies in divinity.

scriptures for edification of Christ's church : or if the laity would be as careful of their spiritual as bodily health, and not take their physic blindfold at such mountebanks' hands as Jesuits, priests, and seminaries be ; who minister none but such as either shall intoxicate the brain, or inflame the heart with preposterous zeal. Nor should variance in points of doctrine amongst divines breed any danger or disturbance to commonweals, if they would not be statists or underminers of states, as the Jesuits be. If their contentions were for the manner uncivil or bitter, as are all contentions which the Jesuits breed, the supreme magistrate, whether ecclesiastic or civil, might bind their tongues and pens to good abearance, were it not for these Romish wolves, which in sheep's clothing convey themselves into the fold of Christ, and, once crept in, will admit of no trial but in the lions' den, unto which they are sworn purveyors ; for whose maintenance (like their master, that great accuser of God's children) *they compass sea and land*, and fetch their range about the world.

10. Who can imagine any other cause (besides this their insolent challenge of sovereignty over all others' faith) why the scripture might not be admitted judge over all controversies of divinity, much better than Hippocrates or Galen of all controversies in physic, without any infallible physician perpetually resident in the world, to give sentence *viva voce*. It is no paradox to hold, that God, which made us these souls, and gave the scripture for their health, did much better know what was necessary for them, than either Hippocrates or Galen did what was good and wholesome for men's bodies, one hair of which they neither made black or white. Even what they best knew, they knew not otherwise to communicate unto posterity than by these

dumb characters or atramentary instructors. Whatsoever our adversaries can urge to the prejudice of scriptures' sufficiency or ability of God's Spirit, is true of these great authors and their writings; all other means of teaching, though their dearest scholars died with them, now not able either to strengthen or consolidate the weak or shallow brain, or illuminate darkened understandings; they cannot so much as take notice of their followers' towardly pains and industry, or reward such as are most devoted to their memory, and use their aphorisms as infallible rules of bodily life and health, with any blessing of art or nature. But our God lives for ever, and knows best who are his, always ready to reward such as love him. And as there is none living but hath received some gift or other from him, so hath he promised to give more and more unto all such as well use what he hath already given. If nature be dulled, so it be not slothful withal³⁴⁶ in good courses, he can sharpen it by art; though both be defective, yet can he so inflame the heart with zeal, as it shall pierce more deeply into the mysteries of man's salvation, than the acutest unregenerate wit, that nature yields, or art can fashion. His Spirit cannot be bound, but bloweth where he listeth, and giveth life to whom he pleaseth, and can enlighten our minds to see that truth now written, which he taught others to write for our good.

11. Physicians look not Hippocrates or Galen should stand on earth again, (Vessalius like,) to read anatomy lectures upon their followers' live-tongues, or other instruments of breath and speech abused to debate and strife, or blowing the coals of bitter dissension about their meaning. But we all look (if we believe aright) that Christ Jesus, who hath left us these his sacred laws, and legend of his most blessed life, as a pattern

whereby to frame our own, free from contention, peaceable, humble, and meek, will one day (after which shall be no more) exact a strict account of every idle word; much more will he punish such tongues or pens as have been continually *set on fire by hell*, with the everlasting flames of that brimstone lake.

12. Were our exorbitant affections brought within compass, by hope and fear answerable to the consequences of the former sweet promises, made to such as rightly use, and terrible threats against all such as abuse the good means ordained by God for knowing his will; his infallible word, from whose mouth soever uttered, yea though but privately read with attentive silence, would instruct us how to demean ourselves in the search of truth; inform us how to direct, fasten, or inhibit: finally, how (in all mysteries of our salvation) to moderate our assent, much better than this supposed infallible authority, residing usually in men most like to heathen idols. Though mouths they have (as they pretend) infallible, yet scarce speak they once in two ages; whose words when they are uttered portend more danger to the Christian world than if brute beasts should speak like men.

13. No Christian commonwealth but either hath or might have good laws for composing contentions, or establishing unity in the study of truth: to see what should be done is never hard, would strength of authority be as willing to enforce men unto a civil and orderly observation of means known and prescribed. Our statutes are much more absolute and complete than Israel's were^y, when it was a sin to inquire after other means, either more easy or effectual for their conduction unto that true happiness whereat all states aim, but only such shall light on as put

^y Deut. xxx. 11, &c.

these sacred laws in execution. It is the common error of all corrupted minds, to seek that far off, which (as the Lord told his people) *is within them, even in their hearts and in their mouths*, so they would be doers, not hearers only of the law. “Many heathens have used such diligent care and unrelenting resolution for just execution of their defective and erroneous laws, as would the coactive power, every where resident where Christianity is professed, use the like for establishing an uniform and impartial, though but an external and civil practice of the ten commandments, and other sacred moral precepts, of whose truth no Christian³⁴⁷ doubts, about whose meaning, nor protestant nor papist, nor any sect this day living, do or can contend : fallible judges might effect what the papists pretend as infallibly, as if every particular congregation had such a true infallible teacher as they falsely deem or feign their pope, to catechise them *ex cathedra* thrice a week.” For who could better resolve us in all points of moment, or retain our hearts in unity of faith, than truth itself, once clearly seen or made known unto us : yet is it in itself much brighter than the sun we daily see ; which it likewise herein exceeds, that whilst God’s word endures amongst us, it still remains above our horizon, and cannot set ; only gross and foggy interpositions (raised from exhalation of such foul lusts and reeking sins, as severe impartial execution of known laws might easily restrain) usually eclipse or hide it from us. Such as are not so eagle-sighted as to behold the brightness of every Divine truth in its proper sphere, might yet safely behold the reflection of it in one part or other of the sacred fountain, were it not troubled with the muddy conceits of unsettled and unquiet brains ; or were not such men oftentimes in great places, as minding nothing but earthly things,

always mingle filth and clay with the crystal streams of the water of life. Happy is that man of God, that in this turbulent age can, in points of greatest moment, see the Divine Truth himself; small hope have any of causing others to see it, whilst carnal minds may every where without fear of punishment, but not without terror of such ecclesiastic power as shall control them, foam out their own shame, and overcast the face of heaven (whence light should come unto their souls) with blasphemous unhallowed breath; whilst dunghill sinks may be suffered to evaporate the abundance of that inward filth, (which is lodged in their hearts,) as it were of purpose to choke the good Spirit of God, whilst it seeks to breathe in others' mouths whose breasts it hath inspired with grace.

14. In brief, (lest my adversary should challenge me of partiality,) "As the means which our church from God's word prescribes for establishing men's hearts in the unity of true faith, (were the execution of known laws any way correspondent,) might (as is said) infallibly effect what the papists falsely pretend; so in truth it cannot without hypocrisy be dissembled, that whiles our practice is so dissonant to our doctrine, and our public discipline so loose, though in detestation of their errors we have turned our backs upon them, with protestation to follow a contrary rule, yet for the most part we jump with them at the journey's end." To omit more final agreements of our contrarieties, elsewhere shewed. They wholly permit the keys of the well of life to one man's hands; who, for his own advantage, we may be sure, will lock it up so close, as none shall look upon it but with spectacles of his making. For as the head is, such we must expect the eyes will be; if the one, the other must be universal too, such as will leave nothing to be seen by private or particular

eyes but what they have seen before ; or in one word, if we admit one absolute visible head, his must be the only eyes of the church. We, not through default of public constitutions, nor so much by connivance of³⁴⁸ ecclesiastic magistrates, as by presumptuous disobedience of inferiors, are so far from committing the custody of this sacred fountain into one or few men's hands, that the flock for the most part never expect the pastor's marshalling, but rushing into it without order, trample in it with unclean feet. If any beam of truth have found entrance into one of their souls, though quickly eclipsed or smothered by earthly cogitations, he straightway presumes God's word more plentifully dwells in him than in all his teachers ; whence if his purse be strong, it is with him as with a horse when provender pricks him, he kicks against all ecclesiastic authority, and spurns at his poor overseer that should feed him ; like the wanton ass in the fable, that seeing the moon lately shining where she was drinking suddenly covered with a cloud, upon imagination she had drunk it up, ran wincing out ere her thirst was quenched, and threw her rider.

15. Thrice happy is that land and state where civil policy and spiritual wisdom, grave experience and profound learning, (in whose right commixture consists the perfect temperature of every Christian state,) do rightly symbolize. These, where they mutually clasp in their extremes, (without intermeddling in the essence of each other's profession,) are like the sideposts or arches in the Lord's house ; and the awful respect of Christ Jesus the Judge of both, and that dreadful day continually sounding in their ears, by the voice of God's faithful and sincere ministers, would be as the binding stone or coupling, to fasten them surely in the joining. But whilst these (each jealous of other) start

asunder, that breach is made whereat the enemies of the church and state hope for speedy entrance, to the utter ruin of both.

Briefly collecting the Sum of this Second Book.

1. To draw a brief map of these large disputes. As the occasions that breed, so the right means to avoid all contentions and schisms, are most perspicuously set down in scriptures. Amongst others most necessary for this purpose, (for the plantation, increase, and strength of true and lively faith,) sincere obedience to spiritual authority is the chief. For more willing and cheerful performance hereof, choice should be made of pastors or overseers, qualified as scripture requires men of so high a calling should be; men not given to quarrels or strife, men of mild and lowly spirits, fearing God and hating covetousness; men esteeming the hidden treasure of a good conscience at so high a rate, as neither fear of man, nor hopes of any worldly favour, can move them to hazard or adventure it. Were these rules, by such as have the oversight of God's flock, as faithfully practised, as they are by scripture plainly taught, the knowledge of God's word should daily increase; piety, devotion, and Christian charity continually flourish; all strife and dissension quickly fade.

2. But if through the default of princes or potentates, no fit choice be made of spiritual governors; if by their negligence, worse be made of inferior ministers; the cause comes not by devolution to be reformed by the congregation. What then? must they be altogether silent at such abuse? No; the scripture hath given as plain a rule for their employment as for the others'. The more or more often higher powers

offend, the more fervently frequent should the lower sort be in pouring out *supplications, prayers, and intercessions for kings, and for all that are in authority*^z, that they may rule according to God's word. In the meantime albeit they rule otherwise, inferiors should consider, that God gives them such superiors for their proneness to disobedience, scurrility, scoffing at lawful authority, or other like sins, expressly forbidden by his word. To every people as well as Israel he gives such rulers in his wrath, as shall not seek them but theirs, not his glory in their salvation, but their own glory by their harm.

3. But as the tongues of inferiors must be tied from scoffing or jesting at men in authority's bad proceedings, so must not the word of God be bound. If their consciences (rightly and unpartially examined) direct them otherwise than their governors command, they must (notwithstanding their superiors' checks) speak as they think until death command them silence; if for the freedom of their speech (upon good warrant of conscience) they be punished, *vengeance is God's, he will repay* superiors for it; unto whose lawful authority whilst obedience is denied upon sinister pretences, or humorous though strong persuasions of conscience, counselling us to the contrary; our punishment in this life is just, whose present smart should teach us to beware of far more grievous in the life to come. But whether offend or swerve more from the rules of scrip-350
ture prescribed for their several Christian carriage, superiors in commanding wrongfully, or inferiors in disobeying just commands, cannot oftentimes (if we speak of particular actions) be infallibly known in this life, but must be referred unto that day of final judgment. The dread of which should in the meantime enforce

^z 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

every superior daily to consult his own heart, and strictly to examine his conscience, whether it be not likely then to give evidence against him, for imposing too heavy burdens upon his inferiors. And so must every inferior again use the like diligence in the daily examination of his conscience, whether it be likely or no to convince him before the Judge of quick and dead of disobedience to such as he had set in authority over him, or of such sinister pretences for using the liberty of conscience, as conscience itself never sought after, but were suggested only by humour, popularity, or other desires, whose maintenance have either enforced him to obey man against God, or not to obey man commanding for God.

4. Our partiality it is towards ourselves, or rather to our sensual delights or pleasures, that makes us so ignorant in all things which concern our weal. For would we truly and unpartially *judge ourselves, we should not be judged*^a. Not the best experienced justice in this land can, by examining ordinary malefactors, discern what issue their cause shall have before an impartial judge, better than we, by this strict pre-examination, might foresee what final sentence were prepared for us, good or bad, according to the diversity of our actions and course of life. To this end hath Christ left every man's conscience in full authority, during his absence, to examine, reprove, convince, and sentence the desires of his own heart; of which would we daily, in sobriety of spirit and fear of his last judgment, ask counsel, and patiently expect God's providence, we should by this ordinary means discern who commanded aright, who otherwise, as clearly as others heretofore have done by means most extraordinary. For even the most extraordinary miracles did ascer-

^a 1 Cor. xi. 31.

tain the ancient of Divine truth, and confirm them in the practice of Christian obedience, not immediately, as part of their rule of faith whereon finally to rely, but by enforcing them to look into their own souls and consciences, in which truth was already written, if they had urged it to confession. If our examination without miracles were as strict, our belief would be as firm, spiritual governors' commands as Christian-like, and inferiors' obedience in all points as sincere as was theirs.

5. For conclusion, I would give the Christian reader a present antidote against all the poisonous enchantments of Romish sorcerers. The medicine is very brief and easy; only to think every morning next his heart, or at other seasonable hours, that there is a Divine Providence in this life to guide us, and after this life ended, a fearful judgment to pass upon all such, as here abjuring the guidance of it, follow either the ways of flesh and blood in breeding, or of carnal wisdom in composing, strife and dissension about matters spiritual. He that will seriously ruminate on these matters in his vacant, well-composed thoughts, calling the adversaries' arguments home to the point, which they must touch ere they can wound us; let me have only his dying curse in recompense of all my pains, if any difficulty, any Jesuit or other learned papist, either hitherto hath, or ever shall be able to 351 bring, do trouble his mind. Whatsoever can be brought either to countenance their unchristian doctrine, or disparage our orthodoxal assertions, either presuppose a secret denial of God's peculiar providence and inward calling of men, or else proceed from want of consideration that there is a final judgment, wherein all controversies must be taken up, all contentious and rebellious spirits punished according to their deserts:

indeed if the authors or abettors of schism and heresy might escape for ever unpunished, or Christian modesty and humility be perpetually overborne by impudency, scurrility, and violent insolency, the inconveniences objected by the Romanists might as much trouble us, as the wicked's thriving did the heathen, that knew not God nor his providence. But whilst we acknowledge him and it, the best arguments our antagonists bring will appear as improbable as they are impious.

BLASPHEMOUS
POSITIONS OF JESUITS

AND OTHER

LATER ROMANISTS,

CONCERNING THE

AUTHORITY OF THEIR CHURCH.

TO
THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
AND MY HONOURABLE LORD,
WILLIAM,
BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM,
GRACE AND PEACE BE MULTIPLIED.

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER,

THE sweet refreshing your honourable favours did yield to such of my labours as hitherto enjoy the light, when a sudden uncomfortable blast had sorely nipped them in the very setting, makes these last gatherings of that spring seek that comfortable warmth under your benign protection, which the unconstant frowning season would hardly afford them in their growth. Besides these and other my personal obligations, that famous and worthy founder of this attic bee-hive, (of whose sweetness would God I had been as capable as I have been long partaker,) had never allotted any cell therein for me, or other countryman of mine, but with particular relation to that seat of dignity, which he sometimes did, your lordship now doth, and to the increase of God's glory and good of his church long may enjoy. Seeing this our great foster-father is now ignorant of his children's demeanour, and knows not me; it shall be my comfort, to have his honourable successors witnesses of my care and industry to fulfil his godly desire, whose religious soul in his life-time (as his written laws do testify) did detest nothing more than idleness in the ministry, especially in his adopted

sons. The matters I here present unto your lordship's and the world's view, are sometimes in themselves so harsh and hard to be concocted, as he that would strive to make them toothsome unto nice tastes, should put himself to excessive pains; unless his judgment be much riper, his wit readier, his invention pleasanter, his opportunities better, and his leisure greater than mine are. But it is one and the same point of judgment, not to require exact mathematical proofs in discourses of morality, or a smooth facile rhetorical style in logical or scholastic conflicts. And as by the statutes of that society wherein I live I am bound to avoid barbarism; so my particular inclination moves me, in controversies especially, to approve his choice that said, *Fortia mallem quam formosa*. If any professed enemy to the truth we teach will answer me from point to point, or attempt (not as their custom now is, only in scoffing sort, but seriously) to avert those unsupportable but deserved imputations I lay upon the foundation of his religion, I shall (I trust) be able to answer him; the better by continuance of your lordship's wonted favours, whom I still request the Christian readers, as many as reap any profit from my pains, on my behalf to remember with such respect as is due to honourable patrons of religious studies, or cherishers of painful endeavours in good causes.

Your Lordship's in all observance,

THOMAS JACKSON.

From Corpus Christi College,

March 25, 1614.

TO THE
INDIFFERENT READER,
SPECIALLY TO
THE LEARNED ARTISTS
OF THE
TWO FAMOUS UNIVERSITIES.

CHRISTIAN AND BELOVED READER,

I HAVE been detained in this entry, though not longer than the structure of it required, yet than I myself, or thou perhaps, could have wished, for speedier dispatch of the main edifice intended. Somewhat notwithstanding, to my apprehension, I had observed, whereby artists more accurate, but younger divines than myself (whose furtherance in the like, throughout all my meditations I still respect) might be directed, for taking sure hold of their slippery antagonists in this conflict: and finding myself every day than other more unapt, more unwilling at least, to be any actor in quarrels of this nature, because most desirous to spend my mortal spirits in opening the pleasant fountains of immortality; I thought it not altogether unlawful to dispense with these labours for a while, in hope to prosecute them more safely and with better success hereafter, by seconding such as had gone before me with my small strength, for intercepting these despiteful Philistims, which continually labour to dam up these

sacred wells of life. Many excellent wits and grave divines, as well in our English as other reformed churches, I knew, had accurately deciphered the special characters of the beast, and demonstrated most properties of great Antichrist upon the pope. But that the fundamental charter of the Romish church, or the commission pretended by Jesuits for the erection of it, should (as the manner was to demolish lesser religious houses for building others more magnificent) extend to rase the very first foundations of religion as common to Christians, Jews, and Turks; that the acknowledgment of such infallibility as they deify her with, should be more incompatible with Christianity than any idolatry of the heathen; that such as absolutely believe all her decrees without examination, truly believe no article of this creed; with the like principal branches of Antichristianism, were points, for aught I knew, rather touched by the way, or proposed as clear in themselves to the indifferent and ingenuous, that judge of the Romish church by the known picture of her misshapen limbs, than prosecuted at large, or with purpose to pull off that artificial painting, wherewith late Jesuits have so beautified this ugly monster's face, that the world, bewitched with gazing too much on it, cannot but love her other deformities, though in themselves most loathsome. For though the practices enjoined by her be so vile, as would have caused Rome heathen to have blushed at their mention, or her other doctrines so palpably gross, that her own sons heretofore have derided them, and as yet spare to speak ought in particular for their defence; yet to salve all this it must suffice, that the church, which cannot err, hath now authorized them.

If any think I prejudice the truth of moderate accusations, by laying such heavy imputations upon this

doctrine, as make it incomparably more detestable than any other, he speaks not inconsequently to his positions, if he hold the Trent council was infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost, or that the pope in cathedral resolutions cannot err. But he which thinks foul impieties may bring Romish prelates out of favour with the spirit of truth, and make them as obnoxious to errors as others are, or can persuade himself that many practices and opinions, by that church already authorized, are in their nature abominable and impious, must either accord to me, or dissent from reason, conscience, and religion. For these, so he will but vouchsafe his silence or attention, jointly proclaim aloud, that nothing amiss, either in matter of doctrine or manners, can be so detestable without this presumptuous groundless warrant of absolute infallibility, as with it; that albeit a man would set himself to practise all particulars directly contrary to what God hath commanded, or to contradict God and his goodness, yet his iniquity without this absolute belief of full authority derived from him so to do, would be but as a body without a soul, in respect of the Romish church's impieties, which makes the Holy Ghost, the principal author of God's written word, the abettor of all her fraud, untruths, or villainies. Briefly, as it is not the doing of those materials God commands us to do, but faithful submission of our wills to his in doing them, which (as St. James instructs us) makes us true Christians: so is it not the doing or maintaining of what God forbids or hates, but the doing of it upon absolute submission of our souls and consciences to other laws than he hath left, which makes men live members of Antichrist, as being animated, informed, and moved by the spirit of error. Now this persuasion of absolute infallibility and universal warrant from the Holy Spirit,

without condition or restraint, being peculiar to the Romish church, admitting it to be as faulty in practices, and as obnoxious to errors as any other, none can be reputed so truly Antichristian as it. For albeit Mahomet pretended Divine revelations, yet his priests challenge no such absolute infallibility as doth the pope; they make no second rocks or foundations, no ordinary pastor equivalent to their great prophet. Whence although the Turks hold opinions in themselves, or materially considered, more gross, and maintain some practices not much less villainous than Jesuits do; yet the grounds or motives of their belief (which are as the soul or spirit of religion) are nothing so pestiferous, nothing so directly opposite to the Holy Spirit, as is this Jesuitical rule of faith. Nor do they either profess such belief in Christ, or acknowledge him for a foundation so elect and precious, as brings them within the temple of God, within which unless Antichrist sit, his contrariety unto Christ could not be so essential, so immediate or direct, as by the rules of sacred philosophy we are taught it must be. Yet I know not whether the indignity of this doctrine is more apt to affect divines and men rightly religious and fearing God, than the sottishness of their arguments to persuade it, to provoke the just indignation of ingenuous artists, which cannot endure, though in matters of indifferency, to captivate their understandings to positions devoid of sense. To require some probability of reason, civil or natural, is on their part no insolent demand, for exchange of Christian faith or adventuring their inassurance of life eternal in the service of mere foreigners whom they never saw. Yet unto peremptory resolutions no less dangerous, do Jesuits solicit us, not only without any tolerable show of probability, but quite contrary to God's principal

laws, and our natural notions of good and evil; as by these labours every academic may in part perceive, but more fully, if he would vouchsafe to sift more of their arguments, than in these short transcursive disputes I could. Nor would I dissuade any artist well grounded in Aristotle from perusing the most learned works any Romanist hath written in this argument. In most other controversies betwixt us and them it is dangerous, I must confess, even for well-grounded artists to begin with their writings; not so in this: for I protest in the sight of God and his holy angels, that as far as I can remember the inclinations of my youth, or by them prognosticate how afterwards I might have been affected, I never was, I never should have been so thoroughly possessed with such great dislike of Romish Antichristianism in this point, by hearing the most famous preachers in this land, or reading all the learned writers in reformed churches, as I was by examining the labours of Bellarmine, Valentian, and others of best note amongst them seriously addressed to this purpose; comparing them only with the known principles of Christianity; and such passages of sacred writ, as every Christian artist should be acquainted with. For the principles whereon I proceed, I have been only beholden to the canon of scriptures, for deducing of such blasphemous consequences from them, as I charge the adversary with, only to that small measure of knowledge in Aristotelian philosophy wherewith my God hath blessed me, whiles I was bound by local statutes to the study of arts, purposely abstaining from other writings, which with their informations of my understanding might have bred prejudice in my affection. Since that time, although the years of my ministry hardly exceed the space of ordinary apprenticeships, yet have I often wished the discussion of these points had

been then imposed upon me by some experienced Divine, that would only have given me right hold of their assertions. Upon this consideration, I would beseech our flourishing artists of these famous academies, whom God hath furnished with all store of munition necessary for this service, not to neglect opportunities present. Let them defer (if so they please) the fruits of their labours in other points (though this be the fault of our English) until the autumn of their age. But the mark I now propose unto them, being the evident resolution of Jesuitical positions into those gross and palpable blasphemies whereto they tend, which they only seek to hide by sophisms and artificial tricks of wit, academical wits might displume them of these fig-tree leaves, and manifest their nakedness to the world, much better in the spring, whiles their skill in arts were fresh and flourishing, whiles the strength and vigour of their invention would more easily bend this way, than in the autumn, when their leaves begin to fade, and their sap retire to the root, as their pleasant grapes grow ripe. Many towardly plants in this nursery, now able to match the stoutest Jesuit living at his own weapon, whilst in his mature age (*multo jam fractus membra labore*, more fit to be a leader than a combatant in these encounters) he shall look back on his former labours, or calls to mind his wonted dexterity in school disputes, may take up old Nestor's complaint;

*Tunc ego debueram capienda ad Pergama mitti ;
Tunc poteram magni, si non superare, morari
Hectoris arma meis : sed in illo tempore nullus,
Aut puer Hector erat ; nunc me mea deficit atas.*

The school Jesuit in these studies is like the ivy, always green, because not set to bring forth fruit unto salvation, but rather to choke and strangle the plants

of life. And for such instruments of the Romish church, as this land usually yields, this wrangling faculty is all the skill they care for, or for the most part make profession of. Yet such is the brittleness of the matter they are to work upon in this controversy, that were all the priests and Jesuits harboured within the confines of Great Britain at this present day, but enjoined to write all they could to any purpose in defence of their mother; some few artists of those universities, which out of their pride they seem to vilify amongst the ignorant, would, I dare not say, make them blush, (for sooner might they make a blackamoor's face of the same colour with his teeth,) but as many of their favourers of this kingdom as have not sworn allegiance to the church of Rome, and are able to examine an argument, to be ashamed on their behalf, even to acknowledge, that for aught these mountebanks could say or write in their defence, the positions maintained by their masters, foreign Jesuits, were indeed idolatrous and blasphemous, howbeit the church itself, we must believe, could never be vanquished, because no man can tell where or in what shape to find it.

Nor need young artists fear the countenance of antiquity in this point, from which their enemies' supplies are so slender, that would they come to open trial, and bring only such of the Fathers for the seconds as lived within five hundred years of Christ, or before the mixture of Romish religion with heathenism, not fully effected till a little after that time; the paucity of those whose aid they durst solicit, in respect of that great army which is as resolute as we against them, would make them instantly either yield themselves or forsake the field. Nor have they been hitherto able to address any answer, but to their shame, to the worthies of the English church, whose labours

have made the conquest in this quarrel easy to any of their successors that will adventure to follow their steps. Nothing remains but what best becomes the exercise of young wits; to exceed the sophistical disputes of Jesuits against the truth, in copiousness of irrefragable demonstrations, that the allegiance they seek to establish unto the Romish church is solemn apostasy from Christ; that the belief of it is the very abstract of sorcery, the utmost degree of Antichristianism that can be expected. These and like points being fortified by strength of argument in the time of your regency or farewell to the study of arts, might be polished at your better leisure, afterwards to be revised and published at the appointment of authority. Or if the zeal of God's glory, thus mightily eclipsed by this foul idol of the Romish church, do not as yet so fully move you; yet that indignation which first wrought a desire in me of giving this onset, should work (methinks) in every heart that bears any sparkle of love unto his native country. For what indignity is it to think, that whilst our gracious sovereign is a most zealous professor and defender of the truth we teach, so many of his natural subjects our countrymen and brethren, should be won unto the Romish faction, especially by importunate inculcating two heresies, of all maintained by that church, in themselves most sottishly improbable; and yet apparently most damnably idolatrous in their consequences, if erroneous: I mean this concerning their church's absolute privilege from all error, and that other of Christ's real presence in the sacrament by transubstantiation. It cannot again but add much to our grief and indignation, if we call to mind how, when the chief governor and public authority of this land were for them, subscription was not urged upon such violent and bloody terms unto any articles of their

religion, as unto that of real presence. The mystery of which iniquity cannot better be resolved than into the powerful and deceitful working of Satan, thus delighting to despise our Lord and Saviour by seducing his professed subjects unto the highest and most desperate kind of rebellion he could imagine, upon the least occasions and shallowest reasons. For such is their madness in that other point, as hath been shown in this; not one inconvenience they can object to our opinion but may be demonstrated against theirs; not any fruits of godliness they can pretend, but our doctrine more directly brings forth than theirs could, though we did admit it for true. For to what other purpose such a pretence as they imagine should serve them, save only to countenance those desperate practices and liturgies of Satan, touched by the way in some parts of these discourses, is inexplicable; as shall be shewed more at large (without depriving that heavenly mystery of any solemnity or devotion due unto it) in the unfolding of that controversy.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

THOMAS JACKSON.

365 BLASPHEMOUS POSITIONS
OF
JESUITS,
AND
OTHER LATER ROMANISTS,
CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF THEIR CHURCH.

THE THIRD BOOK OF
COMMENTS UPON THE CREED.

SECT. I.

*Containing the Assertions of the Romish Church,
whence her threefold Blasphemy springs.*

HAVING in the former dispute clearly acquitted, as well God's word for breeding, as our church from nursing contentions, schisms, and heresies, we may in this, by course of common equity, more freely accuse their injurious calumniators. And because our purpose is not to charge them with forgery of any particular, though grossest heresies or blasphemies, though most hideous, but for erecting an entire frame, capacious of all villainies imaginable, far surpassing the hugest mathematical form human fancy could have conceived of such matters, but only from inspection of this real and material pattern, which by degrees insensible hath grown up with *the mystery of iniquity*, as the bark doth with the tree. Such inconsiderate

passionate speeches as heat of contention in personal quarrels hath extracted from some one or few of their private writers, shall not be produced to give evidence against the church their mother, whose trial shall be (as far as may be) by her peers; either by her own public determinations in this controversy, or joint consent of her authorized best approved advocates, in opening the title or unfolding the contents of that prerogative which they challenge for her.

2. Our accusations are grounded upon their positions before set down, when we explicated the differences betwixt us. The position in brief is this; "That the infallible authority of the present church is the most sure, most safe, undoubted rule in all doubts or controversies of faith, or in all points concerning the oracles of God: by which we may certainly know both; without which we cannot possibly know either, which are the oracles of God, which not, or what is the true sense and meaning of such as are received for his oracles, whether written or unwritten."

3. The extent of Divine oracles, or number of canonical books, hath been (as our adversaries pretend) very questionable amongst the ancient; though such of the Fathers as, for their skill in antiquity, were in all impartial judgments most competent judges in this cause, were altogether for us against the Romanists, and such as were for their opinion, were but for it upon an error, as thinking the Jews had acknowledged all those books of the Old Testament for canonical scripture, which the churches wherein they lived received for such; or that the Christian church did acknowledge all for canonical which they allowed to be publicly read. Safe it was (our adversaries cannot deny) for the ancient, to dissent one from another in

They acknowledge St. Jerome as the oracle of antiquity, and yet directly contradict him in this decree concerning the number of canonical books.

this question, or to suspend their assent till new probabilities might sway them one way or other. No reasons have been produced since, sufficient to move any ingenious mind unto more peremptory resolutions, yet doth the council of Trent bind all to an absolute acknowledgment of those books for canonical, which by their own confession were rejected by St. Jerome and other Fathers. "If any shall not receive the whole books with all their parts (usually read in the church, and as they are extant in the old vulgar) for sacred and canonical, let him be accursed^b." So are all, by the same decree, that will not acknowledge such unwritten traditions as the Romish church pretends to have come from Christ and his apostles for Divine, and of authority equal with the written word.

4. So generally is this opinion received, so fully believed, in that church, that many of her sons, even whilst they write against us, forgetting with whom they have to deal, take it as granted, that the scriptures cannot be known to be God's word, but by the infallible authority of the present church. And from this supposition, as from a truth sufficiently known, (though never proved,) they labour in the next place to infer, That, without submission of our faith to the church's public spirit, we cannot infallibly distinguish the orthodoxal or Divine sense of God's oracles, (whether written or unwritten,) from heretical or human.

5. Should we admit written traditions, and the church withal as absolute judge to determine which are apostolical, which not; little would it boot us to

^b Si quis autem libros ipsos integros cum omnibus suis partibus (prout in ecclesia catholica legi consueverunt, et in veteri vulgata Latina editione habentur) pro sacris, et canonicis non

susceperit; et traditiones prædictas, sciens et prudens contempserit, anathema sit. Conc. Trid. Sess. 4. decret. de Canonicis Scripturis.

question with them about their meaning. For when the point should come to trial, we might be sure to have the very words framed to whatsoever sense should be most favourable for justifying Romish practices. And even of God's written oracles, whose words or characters (as he in his wisdom hath provided) cannot now be altered by an *index expurgatorius* at their pleasure; that such a sense as shall be most serviceable for their turn, may (as time shall minister occasion) be more commodiously gathered; the Trent Fathers, immediately after the former decree for establishing unwritten traditions, and amplifying the extent of Divine written oracles, have in great wisdom authorized "the old and vulgar translation of the whole canon^c. Which though it were not purposely framed to maintain popery," (as some of our writers, say they, have as frivolously as maliciously objected,) "yet certainly, as well the escapes and errors of those unskilful or ill-furnished interpreters, as the negligence of transcribers, or other defects incident to that work, from the simplicity of most ancient, the injuries or calamities of ensuing times, were, amongst others, as the first heads or petty springs of that raging flood of impiety, which had well nigh drowned the whole Christian world in perdition, by continually receiving into its channel (once thus wrought) the dregs and filth of every other error under heaven, with the corrupt remainder of former heresies, for these thousand

The decree of the Trent council authorizing the Latin vulgar edition.

^c Insuper eadem sacrosancta synodus considerans non parum utilitatis accedere posse ecclesiæ Dei, si ex omnibus Latinis editionibus, quæ circumferuntur, sacrorum librorum, quænam pro authentica habenda sit, innotescat: statuit, et declarat, ut hæc ipsa vetus et vulgata editio, quæ

longo tot sæculorum usu in ipsa ecclesia probata est, in publicis lectionibus, disputationibus, prædicationibus, et expositionibus, pro authentica habeatur, et ut nemo illam rejicere quovis pre-textu audeat, vel præsumat. Conc. Trident. Sess. 4. Decret. de editione et usu sacrorum librorum.

years and more.” And “unto many gross errors in Romish religion” (which this imperfect translation did not first occasion) “it yet affords that countenance, which the pure fountains of the Greek and Hebrew do not; but rather would scour and wipe away, were they current in that church. Finally, though it yield not nutriment to enlarge or feed, yet it serves as a cloke to hide or cover, most parts of the great *mystery of iniquity*.”

6. Yet, besides the favourable construction that may be made for that religion, out of the plain and literal sense of this erroneous translation, the church will be absolute judge of all controversies concerning the right interpretation thereof. So as not what our consciences, upon diligent search and just examination, shall witness to us, but what the church shall declare to them, must be absolutely acknowledged for the true intent and meaning of God’s word, as it is rendered by the Vulgar interpreter: to this purpose is the very next decree:

The Trent council’s decree for interpretation of scriptures.

7. “Moreover, for bridling petulant dispositions, it is decreed; That no man, in confidence of his own wisdom or skill in matters of faith and manners, making for the edification of Christian doctrine, shall dare to interpret scriptures, wresting them to his own conceit or sense, against that sense or meaning, which the holy church our mother, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of sacred writ, heretofore hath held, or now doth hold, albeit he never purpose to publish such interpretations^d.”

d Præterea ad coercenda petulantia ingenia, decernit, ut nemo, suæ prudentiæ innixus, in rebus fidei, et morum, ad edificationem doctrinæ Christianæ pertinentium, sacram scripturam

ad suos sensus contorquens, contra eum sensum quem tenuit, et tenet sancta mater ecclesia, cuius est judicare de vero sensu, et interpretatione scripturarum sanctarum, aut etiam contra una-

8. It is further added in the same place, (because I 368 take it had been specified in a synod before,) that “no man shall dare to interpret scriptures against the unanimous consent of Fathers.” Which I think were impossible for any man to do; though were it possible, few or none would attempt, besides the papists. For neither can it be known what all of them hold in most places, whereupon are grounded controversies of greatest moment; and in such as we have best plenty of their interpretations, albeit they do not contentiously dissent, yet absolutely agree each with other they do not. Even one and the same Father oftentimes thinks of many interpretations, sundry alike probable: most of them unwilling, by their peremptory determinations one way or other, to prejudice the industrious search of others (though their far inferiors) for finding out some more commodious than any they bring; oftentimes intimating their doubts or imperfect conjectures in such manner, as if they would purposely encourage their successors to seek out some better resolution than they could find. Whence it is evident, That we should not always interpret scriptures against the joint consent of Fathers, albeit we went against all the particular interpretations which they have brought; because they were more desirous to have the truth fully sifted, than their conjectural probabilities infallibly believed: nor were it possible more to contradict most of them, than by following their interpretations upon such strict terms as the Romanists would bind all men to do, when they seem to make for their advantage. Not

ninem consensum patrum, ipsam scripturam sacram interpretari audeat, etiamsi hujusmodi interpretationes nullo unquam tempore in lucem edendæ forent.

Qui contravenerint, per ordinarios declarentur, et pœnis a jure statutis puniantur. Concil. Trident. ibidem.

the least surmise or conjecture of any one Father, but, if it please them, must suffice against the joint authority of all the rest. For in all the three points above mentioned, they admit the church (as may appear from the decrees cited) for a judge so absolute, that no man may embrace any opinion, upon what grounds or probabilities soever, but with humble submission to her censure: whatsoever she shall enjoin in all or any of these points, (albeit we have reasons, many and strong, not to hold it, to hold not one besides her bare authority,) yet must all believe it alone as absolutely, as if we had the apparent unanimous consent of Fathers, yea of prophets, apostles, or evangelists, and all good writers in every age.

Bellar-
mine's as-
sertion con-
cerning the
church's
authority
grounded
upon the
former de-
cree.

9. Hence Bellarmine rejects (as dissonant to the former decree) this resolution of Luther^e, "That albeit the pope and council conclude points of faith, yet have private men a free arbitrement" (so far as it concerns themselves) "whether they may safely believe their conclusions or no." Luther gives two reasons for his assertion, both most forcible. The one, because the "pope shall not answer for private men at the hour of their death;" the other, because none are competent judges of false doctrines but men spiritually minded; whenas it often falls out, that in their councils there cannot be found one man (much less a major part of

^e In articulis 115 ex illis 500 quos Cochläus collegit ex libris Lutheri, sic ait: "Capite hoc evangelium, quia neque papæ, neque conciliis, neque ulli hominum commissum est, ut constituat, et concludat, quid sit fides. Ideo debeo dicere: Papa, tu conclusisti cum conciliis, nunc habeo ego iudicium, an acceptare queam necne. Quare? quia non stabis pro me, et respondebis pro

me, quando debeo mori. Et falsam doctrinam nemo judicare potest, nisi spiritualis homo. Ideo res est insana, quod concilia concludere et statuere volunt, quid credendum sit: cum sæpe nullus vir sit ibi, qui divinum spiritum vel modicum olfecerit." Idem confirmat in assertionibus articul. 27, 28, et 29. Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, lib. 3. cap. 3.

men, without which how many soever there were, all were as none) that hath any the least relish of the Divine spirit. The like assertion doth the Jesuit condemn in Brentius.

10. "It is not lawful," saith Brentius^f, "for any man, 369 in a point of salvation, so to rely upon another's sentence, as to embrace it without interposition of his own judgment." The reason is there intimated; because, "every man is to be immediately judged by his own conscience; and may, for avoiding the just censure of condemnation by it, safely disclaim their opinions, the execution of whose sentence or bodily punishment he may not decline;" seeing they are (as was observed before) public and lawful, yet fallible judges of controversies in religion. And Bellarmine bewrays either gross ignorance or great skill in wrangling, when he exclaims against this position of Brentius, as absurd and repugnant to itself—That the supreme magistrate, or public judge, may be bound to command, where the subject or inferior is not bound to obey. For^g as well

^f Similiter Brentius docet in confessione Wirtembergica, cap. de sacra scriptura: et copiosius in prolegomenis contra Petrum a Soto, ubi duo dicit. Primo "Non licet," inquit, "in causa æternæ salutis salienæ sententiæ ita inhærere, ut eam sine nostro ipsorum iudicio amplectamur." Secundo addit, "Ad unumquemque hominem privatum pertinet, de doctrina religionis judicare, et veram a falsa internoscere. Sed hoc interest inter privatum et principem, quod ut privatus privatam, ita princeps publicam habet de doctrina religionis potestatem judicandi et decidendi," &c. Nec illud advertit, si hæc sententia vera sit, recte facturum

Cæsarem, et alios catholicos Germaniæ principes, si etiam mortis supplicio cogant omnes Lutheranos ad fidem catholicam. Bellar. de Verb. Dei, lib. 3. cap. 3.

^g So Bellarmine grants, that St. Cyprian did not commit any mortal sin, in contradicting pope Stephen's decree, whom out of ignorance he oppugned, his reason is good, because this persuasion remaining in full strength, he had sinned against his conscience in obeying the pope. His words are these; Ex una parte non videtur mortaliter peccasse, quia non peccavit nisi ex ignorantia; putavit enim pontificem perniciose errare; et stante illa opinione, tenebatur ei non obe-

the prince in commanding, as the people in obeying, must follow whither their consciences lead them. Both may, and in case they disagree, the one or other cannot but err in the precedent information of their consciences; and herein properly doth their sin consist, not in doing what erroneous conscience, upon so strict terms as penalty of eternal death, doth unnecessarily urge them to^h.

11. "The people," saith Canusⁱ, "did absolutely (not upon condition) believe God and his servant Moses:" and unless men so believe the church, they make it of no authority. Nor is it enough to believe it to be infallible in points of moment, or such as might overthrow faith; unless it be acknowledged so absolutely inerrable in all, as it cannot either believe or teach amiss in any question of faith; for if in any, (seeing there is one and the same reason of all,) it might as well fail in receiving some books (indeed not such) for canonical and divine. Whereupon it would follow, that this argument would not follow^k, the

dire, quia non debebat contra conscientiam agere. Ignorantia autem Cypriani non videtur fuisse crassa, neque affectata, sed probabilis, et proinde excusans a mortali peccato. Bellar. lib. 4. de Roman. Pontif. cap. 7.

^h Vide lib. 2. cap. 6. paragr. 11. et cap. 32. paragr. 2, 3.

ⁱ Canus' assertion concerning the church's authority. Nihil igitur afferunt (forte *asserunt*) qui ecclesiæ auctoritatem non absolute sed ex conditione ponunt. Si namque ad eum modum res habet, et mihi quoque fides habenda est, quando pronuntiavero secundum scripturas recte intellectas. Id enim est non mihi sed scripturæ credere. At,

absolute, non ex conditione populus Domino credidit, et Moisi servo ejus. Absolute etiam prophetis et apostolis populi crediderunt. Quale vero esset prophetis apostolisque loquentibus, fidem, ea acceptione, detrahere, quod perperam Dei verba intellexissent? Canus de Eccles. Cathol. lib. 4. cap. 4.

^k In summa si ecclesia posset in fidei quæstione falli, librum quoque ut divinum recipere posset, qui tamen a Deo non fuisset. Cum sit eadem ratio de uno libro, ac de unoquolibet dogmate. Quare non valeret argumentum, ecclesia habet evangelium Matthæi pro canonico, ergo canonicum est. Quod quoniam impiissime

church acknowledgeth St. Matthew's Gospel for canonical, therefore it is canonical. The denial of which consequence is most impious and absurd, in this man's censure, fully consonant to Valentian before cited, "that scripture which is commended unto us, and expounded by the authority of the church, is now even in this respect" (because the church commends it) "most authentic."

12. Unto these and far more gross conclusions, all their modern writers, for ought I can find, think themselves bound by the former decrees of the Trent council. But what if any should dissent from these great champions in the interpretation of it? who should judge betwixt them, or whither were they to repair for resolution? "To the place which God hath chosen," to wit, to the see apostolical, or, in other terms, to Rome: so saith the pope that confirmed this council¹. As if there were only a translation of the see, none of the priesthood sometimes established in Jerusalem; where all were to worship. And "if Rome have that place in Christendom which Jerusalem had in Jewry, the pope must be such a Lord to all Christians, as he that dwelt betwixt the cherubims was to the Israelites;" both their answers of like authority.

et absurdissime diceretur; illud nos dicamus potius, recte fideles ecclesiam catholicam credere, non solum in eo sensu, ut ecclesiæ catholicæ fides deficiat nunquam: sed in eo etiam, ut nihil ipsa credere aut docere possit, quod sit veræ fidei contrarium. Canus, *ibid.* paulo ante, The authority ascribed to the pope in his bull of confirmation.

¹ Si cui in eis aliquid obscurius dictum, et statutum fuisse, eamque ob causam interpretatione aut decisione aliqua egere visum fuerit; ascendat ad locum, quem

Dominus elegit, ad sedem videlicet apostolicam, omnium fidelium magistrum, cujus auctoritatem etiam ipsa sancta synodus tam reverenter agnovit. Nos enim difficultates et controversias, si quæ ex eis decretis ortæ fuerint, nobis declarandas et decidendas, quemadmodum ipsa quoque sancta synodus decrevit, reservamus, parati, sicut ea nobis merito confisa est, omnium provinciarum necessitatibus ea ratione quæ commodior nobis visa fuerit providere. Bull. Pii 4. Sup. Confirm. Concil. Trid.

13. But when we repair to Rome, who shall there determine what the council meant? the pope alone, or with his cardinals? with his cardinals, if he please; himself alone, without them, or any other, if he list; all after, as he shall find himself disposed to use his ordinary or plenary power^m: by the former of which, (answerable to God's working with natural agents,) he determines of matters by the usual course of laws provided for that purpose, using the advice or counsel of his assistants; by the other, (correspondent to God's working in miracles effected by his own immediate peculiar power,) without the coagency of any inferior or created cause, he may resolve of himself alone, not consulting his cardinals, bishops, or others. This power and libertyⁿ the Trent council itself seems to give

^m Plenitudinem, quæ fuit beato Petro communicata, dicunt doctores ad papam pertinere, non solum quia quod omnibus et singulis prælatis in ecclesia Dei concessum est, id solus papa potest, sed etiam quia amplius quam illi omnes, et singuli possunt, ipse unus potest; eo exemplo utentes, quod quemadmodum Deus potuerit statuere leges naturalibus rebus, ut juxta eas operarentur: potest tamen idem Deus præter leges naturæ ex propria virtute sua agere, quod miraculum vocari solet: sic in ecclesia, spectat, ad summum pontificem condere leges morales, et prescribere jus omnibus personis ecclesiasticis, et toti ecclesiæ, idem tamen non semper tenetur servare hujusmodi leges, sed potest agere præter illas. Quando igitur papa ea vult observare, quæ suis legibus continentur, tunc dicitur uti potestate ordinaria. Quando vero, aliquid vult exequi supra id, quod

legibus constitutum est, tunc dicitur plenitudinem potestatis exercere. Paleot. de sacr. Consist. Consult. part. 1. quæst. 3. art. 1.

ⁿ The authority given to the pope by the Trent council. Superest nunc, ut principes omnes, quod facit, in Domino moneat, ad operam suam ita præstandam, ut, quæ ab ea decreta sunt, ab hæreticis depravari aut violari non permittant; sed ab his et omnibus devote recipiantur et fideliter observentur. Quod si in his recipiendis aliqua difficultas oriatur; aut aliqua inciderint quæ declarationem, (quod non credit,) aut definitionem postulant, præter alia remedia, in hoc concilio instituta, confidit sancta synodus beatissimum Romanum pontificem curaturum, ut, vel evocatis ex illis præsertim provinciis, unde difficultas orta fuerit, iis, quos eidem negotio tractando viderit expedire, vel etiam concilii generalis celebra-

unto the pope, as it were for an upshot to all the fools' thunderbolts they had let flee before. And lest any man should think this absolute acknowledgment of the pope's plenary power to be a counsel, rather than a necessary precept; the Catechism published by the Trent council's authority hath inserted amongst the 371 articles of faith, That the present pope is the sole visible head of the whole Christian church, though Christ the invisible^o. The meaning of which (if I mistake not) is this, That the pope, concerning the points above mentioned, hath as absolute power in Christ's absence, as Christ himself should have were he present, or shall have in that day of final judgment¹ wherein if these men's positions be true, he shall have nothing to do in matters of faith, but only to ratify what the pope hath defined, who must not be called to any account of his spiritual, as kings and monarchs must be for their temporal stewardships. Nor shall it

tione, si necessarium judicaverit, vel commodiore quacunque ratione ei visum fuerit, provinciarum necessitatibus pro Dei gloria, et ecclesiæ tranquillitate consulatur. Concil. Trid. Session. 25. De recipiendis et observandis decretis Concilii.

^o The authority given to the pope by the Roman Catechism. Ecclesia vocatur una, tanta hominum multitudo, quæ tam longe lateque diffusa est, ob eas causas, quæ ab apostolo ad Ephesios scriptæ sunt. Unum enim Dominum, unam fidem, unum baptismum tantum esse prædicat. Unus est etiam ejus rector et gubernator, invisibilis quidem Christus, quem æternus Pater dedit caput super omnem ecclesiam, quæ est corpus ejus: visibilis autem is, qui Romanam cathedram Petri

apostolorum principis legitimus successor tenet. And immediately after proposing this question, Quid de Romano pontifice, visibili ecclesiæ Christi capite, sentiendum est? confirms the former blasphemous doctrine with this shameless lie; De eo fuit illa omnium patrum ratio et sententia consentiens, hoc visibile caput ad unitatem ecclesiæ constituendam et conservandam necessarium fuisse. Catech. Roman. part. 1. cap. 10. de Nono Art. de Eccles. Cathol. quæst. 10. et 11.

^p The institution of sacraments and certain other excellencies, as they call them, are by their confession peculiar unto Christ, not communicable unto his vicar-general.

be said to him, as it must be to some of them, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant*: for such men only (by our adversaries' doctrine) do well as might have done ill; but the pope (live as he list) cannot possibly do amiss in determining matters of faith, which are, of all that are, of greatest difficulty and consequence.

14. When first I read Josephus Acosta, I much wondered to see a man, otherwise of an ingenuous spirit, and of parts so excellent, so zealous withal for the pope's supremacy; but now I perceive the reason was, all private catechisms were to be conformed unto that public one, authorized by the council and pope. Amongst other contents of that article of the catholic church, (almost quite omitted in the former Indian Catechisms,) Acosta's advice is^q, to have this inserted as an essential part, That the pope is head of the catholic church; Christ's vicar on earth, endued with his plenary power; to whom all other Christians (kings and princes not excepted) owe obedience.

These allegations may testify our sincerity in proposing the state of the question, and points of difference betwixt us, gathered not out of one or two, but the general agreement of best Romish writers: and whereunto Valentian, were he alive, would willingly subscribe. For he, as since I have observed^r, pro-

^q Doceantur ergo Indi de ecclesia, tria præcipue. Primum, quid illa sit, congregatio certe hominum Christum, doctrinamque Christi profitentium; non Hispanorum aut barbarorum, aut nationis et gentis cujusdam numero et sorte definita, omnia terrarum spatia, omnes temporum successiones complectens. — Hujus vero caput esse Romanæ urbis pontificem,

Petri successorem, Christi vicarium, plenissima ipsius in terris autoritate pollentem, cui cæteri omnes Christiani, etiam reges et principes pareant. Hoc est, ecclesiam catholicam credere, et universalem. Jos. Acosta lib. 5. cap. 7. de procuranda Indorum salute.

^r An ut fidei objectum per Christianam fidem infallibiliter credatur, satis sit, illud esse re-

poseth the title of his main controversy concerning the church's authority, in terms equivalent to those I used, lib. 2. sect. 1. cap. 3. and lib. 1. paragr. ult.

SECT. II.

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The first Branch of Romish Blasphemy, in preferring human Authority before Divine.

AGAINST these late recited, and infinite other equivalent assertions, frequent in their public determinations, and best private writers, our writers usually object, If the church be judge of scriptures, her authority must be above the scriptures; if the sense of scripture, without the church or pope's asseveration or proposal be not authentic, nor apt to beget most firm belief; then the word of God must receive strength and authority from the word of man.

The general objection of reformed churches against the former assertions.

Some Romish writers grant the inference, with this restraint, "in respect of us," and yet wipe their mouths with the whore in the Proverbs, as if they had neither committed idolatry, nor spoken blasphemy. But Bellarmine was too cunning a bawd to expose his mother's foul face to public view without more artificial painting.

velatum divinitus, et explicatum a quovis legitimo verbi Dei ministro: an vero præterea necesse sit, illud tanquam a Deo revelatum, et ideo credendum proponi et ostendi fidelibus per infallibilem aliquam et præeminentem auctoritatem, ad quam proinde

spectat editio symboli, seu articulorum fidei, et judicium atque definitio omnium fidei controversiarum, quæ unquam oriri possunt. Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. in tit. Puncti.

Bellarmino's Reply to the main Objection, jointly urged by all reformed Churches against the Romish: the Equivocation, which he sought in the Objection, apparently found in his Reply.

1. THE former argument, howsoever much esteemed by such as bring it, yet in Bellarmine's judgment is very weak, and as he suspects, "sick of his own disease:" *Totum in equivocatione versatur*. The equivocation he seeketh to unfold with this distinction; "The former speeches may admit a double sense. First, their meaning may be, That the church doth judge whether that which the scriptures teach be true or false: or secondly, (this sure foundation of faith being first laid, The words of scripture are most infallible and true,) The church doth judge which is the true interpretation, or meaning of them." This distinction he applieth thus: "The former objections were pertinent, if we held the pope or council to determine of scriptures in the former sense; but taking our right meaning, they are mere calumnies. For we affirm the church to judge scriptures only in the latter: and so to judge them, doth not set the church or pope above scriptures, but above the judgment of private men. Nor doth the church" (by this assertion) "become a judge of scriptures' truth, but of private men's understanding. Neither will it hence follow, that the word of God receiveth strength from the word of man; but private men's knowledge may and doth receive strength and infallibility from the church." Finally, "the scripture or word of God" (as Bellarmine thinks) "is neither more true or certain, because it is expounded by the church; but every man's opinion is more

true and stable, when it is confirmed by the church's exposition or decision^r."

He hath said as much as the whole council of Trent could have said for themselves. But let us see if this be enough.

2. "A private man's opinion," saith Bellarmine, "is truer, when it is confirmed by the church." If we had only an opinion of the truth or sense of scriptures, the consent of others, especially men skilful in such matters, would indeed much confirm us; for all opinions, or uncertain persuasions, receive increase of strength from addition of probabilities. But his words are more general, and concern not only uncertain, but all persuasions, that a faithful man in this life can have of God's word; at least of those writings which we and they acknowledge for such: and the mark he aims at is, That no persuasion in Divine matters can be certain, without the church's confirmation; as he expressly addeth in his answer to the next argument^s.

3. If the reader will be attentive, he shall easily perceive, that not our writer's objections, but Bellarmine's

^r Respondeo, hoc argumentum, quod ab hæreticis plurimi fit, totum in æquivocatione versari: nam duobus modis potest intelligi ecclesiam judicare de scripturis. Uno modo, quod judicet, verumne sit an falsum quod scripturæ docent: altero modo, quod posito ut fundamento certissimo, scripturæ verba esse verissima, judicet quæ sit vera eorum interpretatio. Et quidem si primo modo ecclesia judicaret, vere esset supra scripturam, sed hoc non dicimus, quamvis hæretici calumnientur id nos dicere, qui passim vociferantur nos subjicere scripturam pedibus papæ. At secundo modo judi-

care ecclesiam, vel pontificem de scripturis, quod nos asserimus, non est ecclesiam esse supra scripturam, sed supra judicia privatorum hominum. Non enim judicat ecclesia de veritate scripturæ, sed de intelligentia tua, et mea, et aliorum. Neque hinc sumit verbum Dei aliquod robur, sed intelligentia nostra. Non enim scriptura est verior aut certior, quia sic ab ecclesia exponitur, sed mea sententia est verior, quando ab ecclesia confirmatur. Bellarm. de Verb. Interpret. lib. 3. cap. 10. resp. ad 14 arg.

^s See the next chapter.

answer, is tainted with equivocation. For this speech of his, "The church doth judge whether that which the scriptures teach be true or false," hath a double and doubtful sense.

In what sense (as impertinent as true) God's word by Romanists is acknowledged of greater authority than the church.

It may be meant, either

Of scriptures taken indefinitely or indeterminately, for that which God hath spoken, whatsoever that be. Or,

Of those particular scriptures which we and they acknowledge, or any determinate (written or unwritten) precepts questionable, whether they were from God or no.

4. If we speak of scriptures in the former sense, Bellarmine's answer is true. For the Romish church doth not take upon her to judge, whether that which is supposed, or acknowledged by all for God's word, be most true in its proper and native, but indeterminate sense, seeing this is a maxim unquestionable, (amongst all such as have any notion of a Deity,) "Whatsoever God hath spoken is most true, in that sense wherein he meant it." But if we descend to any terminate speeches, written or unwritten, either acknowledged or supposed for God's word, or such as can but ground any possible question, whether they are God's words or no: the present Romish church doth take upon her absolutely to judge of all and every part of them. For this is the very abstract or abridgment of that infinite prerogative which she challengeth; All men must infallibly believe that to be God's word which she commends; that not to be his word which she disclaims for such. So as only the former transcendent and indeterminate truth, "Whatsoever God saith is true," is exempt from the pope's unlimited, transcendent, royal sentence; no other word or syllable of truth, which we can imagine God hath or might have spoken since the

world began, either by his own or his Son's mouth, by the ministry of his angels, prophets, apostles, or evangelists, but is every way absolutely subject to the pope's monarchical censure.

5. And here, let not the reader mistake it as any argument of our adversaries' ingenuity, that they will for their own advantage vouchsafe to grant, (what no heathen idolater did ever deny,) "whatsoever God saith is true." For unless this were granted by all, the pope could have no possible grounds of pretence or claim to his absolute infallibility, or infinite supremacy over all. And that which his hirelings seek to build upon the former foundation, is, Whatsoever the pope hath said or shall say *ex cathedra* is most true; because, if we descend to any determinate truths, we must believe that God hath spoken all, and only that, which the pope hath already testified, or (when any question ariseth) shall testify he hath spoken. In fine, the present pope (by their positions) is God's only living mouth, only all-sufficient to justify, or authentically witness all his words past; all which, without him, are unto us as dead. Whence they must of necessity admit the same proportion betwixt the present pope's³⁷⁵ and God's acknowledged written word, or supposed unwritten verity, which in civil matters we make betwixt a credible man's personal avouchment or living testimony of what he hath seen, heard, or known by undoubted experience, and another man's hearsay report, either of the matters he spake of, his speeches themselves, or their true sense and meaning, after his death. For the prophets, apostles, and evangelists (to use their own words^t) are dead, and Christ is absent; so as we can neither be certain what they have spoken, or what they meant in their supposed speeches, but

^t Sacroboscus and Valentian both use the like speeches.

per vivam vocem ecclesiæ, by the living voice of the present visible church; whose words are altogether as unfallible as God's own words were. And for this reason, must be acknowledged a most absolute judge of God's written and unwritten words, as well of their spiritual sense and meaning, as of their outward frame or visible character. This is the height of their iniquity, and will infer more than our purposed conclusion in this section, That even of such places as are acknowledged by them for God's word, we must not believe any determinate sense or meaning, but what the pope shall expressly give, or may be presumed to allow of.

6. This doctrine, as I would request the reader to observe, brings the second and third Person in Trinity on the one party, and the pope on the other, to as plain and evident competition for rule or sovereignty over professed Christians' faith, as God and Baal were at in Elias' time. This their doctrine (thus in show grounded upon, in deed and issue most opposite to scriptures) is the true spiritual inquisition house, whereof that material or bodily one is but a type: these following are the joints or limbs of that rack of conscience, whereunto all such as are or would be true members of Christ, but willing withal to hold their union with the pope as visible head of the church, are daily and hourly subject.

The Rom-
ish rack of
conscience.

7. First, their souls are tied, by surest bonds of faith and nature, unto this principle, "Whatsoever God hath said is most true:" the Jesuits again seek to fasten their faith and conscience as strongly unto this; "God speaks whatsoever the pope speaks *ex cathedra*:" this third likewise must be believed as an oracle of God, even by papists; (for the pope hath spoken it *ex cathedra*;) "The books of Moses, the Prophets,

the four Evangelists, are God's words." Whatsoever these have spoken, we contend, all should believe for God's own word, upon such grounds as St. Peter did from experience of their life-working sense, communicate unto them by hearing, reading, meditating, or practice. But the pope, upon some controversies arising, propounds a sense of these writings, or of some part of them, quite contrary to that which brought the former comfort to our souls; a sense, to all impartial senses, contradictory to the places jointly acknowledged for God's word. A sense, the more we think on in sobriety, the more we dislike; a sense, the more earnestly we pray to God for his Spirit's assistance, and other good means for the right understanding of his word, and increase of faith, the more still we distaste and loathe. Here, unless we let go some one or more of the mentioned holdfasts of faith, either the first, "Whatsoever God saith is true," or the second, "Whatsoever the pope saith, God saith," or the third, "The Mosaical, evangelical, and apostolical writings, or those particular places, about whose sense the controversy is, were spoken by God;" our souls are put to more violent torture than Ravallac's body was. But the true papists are wise enough to slip the third or last, so as it shall not pinch them; and have a trick withal to make the first yield what way they please, who are resolved to follow what way soever it shall please the pope's authority (whereunto their souls indeed are only tied) to lead them. But of such as ever had, or hope to have, any taste or relish of God's Spirit, if any should resolve absolutely to believe his interpretation of any place of scripture, contrary to that life-working sense which must be in every heart endued with hope of seeing God; that man's disloyalty towards God and his Holy Spirit is as impudent, as if a poor subject should reply

Lest they might in any doubt go against their conscience, they are taught to believe, That whatsoever the pope shall command is good, and cannot hurt the conscience. See the next annotation out of Bel-larmine.

upon his prince, commanding him in express terms to do thus, or so, "I will not believe your words have any such meaning as they naturally import ; but a contrary, such as one of my fellow-servants hath already acquainted me withal: whatsoever you say, I know your meaning is, I should believe him in all things concerning your will and pleasure ; and whatsoever he shall enjoin, that will I do."

4. That neither the church can prove the scriptures', nor the scriptures the church's authority, was proved in the fourth section of the former book ; that such as hold this damnable doctrine, against which we dispute, do not at all believe God speaking in the scriptures, shall be evinced in the third section of this ; the present inconvenience, which now (will they nill they) we are to wrest from their resolutions of faith, is, That (in deed and conscience) they either acknowledge no authority in the church or scriptures, or else greater in the church than in scriptures.

Inferring the General Conclusion proposed in the Title of this Section from Bellarmine's Resolution of Faith.

1. As well to occasion the learned reader's further consideration of their ill-grounded and worse builded faith, as for deducing thence the proposed inconvenience, it will not be amiss to propose Bellarmine's resolution of a Roman catholic's faith. One especial objection of our writers, as he frameth it, is, That faith (if depending on the church's judgment) is grounded but upon the word of man, a weak foundation for such an edifice ; that the scripture was given by the Spirit of God, and must therefore be understood by the same, not by the church's spirit. Hereunto Bellarmine answereth, "The word of the church, i.e. of the council, or

the pope speaking *ex cathedra*, is not the bare word of man. He means no word obnoxious to error, but in some sort the word of God: inasmuch as it is uttered by the assistance and government of the Holy Ghost. I add," saith he, "that heretics are they which indeed do lean upon a broken reed. For we must know, that a proposition of faith must be concluded in this or the like syllogism^u: Whatsoever God hath revealed in scripture is true; but God hath revealed this or that in scripture; *ergo*, this or that is true. The first proposition in this syllogism is certain amongst all; the second likewise amongst catholics is most firm, as being supported by the testimony of the church, counsel, or pope: of whose immunity from possibility of erring we have express promises in the scriptures; as, *It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us*^x: *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith should not fail*^z. But amongst heretics, the second or minor proposition is grounded only on conjecture, or judgment of a private spirit; which usually seems, but is not good. Whence,

Bellar-
mine's
Catholic
Syllogism,
wherein all
conclusions
of faith
must be ga-
thered.

^u Respondeo, verbum ecclesiæ, id est, concilii, vel pontificis docentis *ex cathedra*, non esse omnino verbum hominis, id est, verbum errori obnoxium, sed aliquo modo verbum Dei, id est, prolatum gubernante et assistente Spiritu sancto, immo dico, hæreticos esse qui revera nitantur baculo arundineo. Sciendum est enim, propositionem fidei concludi tali syllogismo. Quicquid Deus revelavit in scripturis, est verum: hoc Deus revelavit in scripturis, ergo hoc est verum. Ex propositionibus hujus syllogismi prima certa est apud omnes, secunda apud catholicos est etiam firmis-
sima: nititur enim testimonio

ecclesiæ, concilii, vel pontificis, de quibus habemus in scripturis apertas promissiones quod errare non possint. Actorum 15. *Visum est Spiritui Sancto et nobis.* Et Luc. 22. *Rogavi pro te, ut non deficiat fides tua.* At apud hæreticos nititur solis conjecturis, vel judicio proprii spiritus, qui plerumque videtur bonus, et est malus. Et cum conclusio sequatur debiliorem partem, fit necessario, ut tota fides hæreticorum sit conjecturalis, et incerta. Bellarm. de Verb. Dei interpret. lib. 3. cap. 10. resp. ad 15. arg.

^x Acts xv. 28.

^y Luke xxii. 32.

seeing the conclusion must follow the weaker part, it necessarily follows, that all the faith of heretics" (such in his language are all that will not rely upon the church) "is but conjectural and uncertain."

2. A dreadful imputation, could it be as substantially proved as it is confidently avouched. And the consequence of his resolution (generally held by all his fellows) is of no less importance than this; that no man can be infallibly assured either of the truth or true sense of any particular proposition, in the whole canon of scriptures received by us and them, unless he have the church's authority for confirmation of both. For unto us, that only which the church avoucheth is certain and unfallible, that sense of it which the church gives only sound, if we speak of any particular or determinate truths.

378 3. How certain and unfallible assent unto all or any scriptures may be wrought in men's hearts, without any infallible teacher, already hath been, and hereafter shall be (God willing) in more particular sort, exemplified. In this place it stood the Jesuit upon to have given a better solution to the doubt objected; which he is so far from unloosing, that he rather knits it faster; as shall appear, if the reader will first call to mind, that for the establishing of firm and undoubted assent to any truth proposed, it skills not how infallible the truth in itself or the proposer be, unless they, whose belief or assent is demanded, be as infallibly persuaded of this infallibility in the truth, or the proposer. In this respect, our adversaries plead their immunity from error, as an article necessary to be infallibly believed, for confirmation of God's word, always most infallible (as all grant) in itself, but not so (as they affirm) to us, until it be avouched by infallible authority.

4. Herein they concur with us, both with the truth, that if we believe it only as probable that God spake all those words which we acknowledge to be most infallible because his, our belief notwithstanding is not infallible, but probable or conjectural: for as a man may have bad desires of things essentially good, so may he have uncertain persuasions of truths in themselves most certain. It is not therefore the supposed infallibility of the church or pope, howsoever, but infallibly apprehended and believed, that must strengthen our faith, which otherwise (as is pretended) would be but conjectural. And by the former principle (acknowledged as well by them as us) it necessarily follows, that if we be only probably, not infallibly persuaded the pope or church cannot err, our assent unto the minor proposition (i. e. unto any determinate part of God's word) is only probable, not infallible. For by the Jesuits' doctrine, we cannot be certainly persuaded that God spake this or that but by the church's testimony. The immediate consequence of which two assertions, compared together, is, we cannot be more certain that God hath spoken this or that, than we are of the church's infallibility. If then we be only probably, not infallibly, persuaded that the church is infallible; our belief of the minor proposition (that is, of any determinate truth which men suppose God hath spoken) must be only probable or conjectural, not infallible. Consequently to these collections, the learned papists generally hold, that the church's infallibility must be absolutely and infallibly believed; (as you heard before out of Canus, Bellarmine, and Valentian;) otherwise, as Bellarmine would infer, our belief of the minor in any syllogism, wherein a proposition of faith is concluded, can be but conjectural.

Cap. I. The first difficulty in their opinion whence our former conclusion may be deduced.

5. The proposed inconvenience we may derive from

this difficulty, How the papists themselves can attain to the infallible belief of the church's infallible authority? The church, they think, hath a public spirit, and public spirits, they know, are infallible; hence they may persuade themselves the church is infallible, only upon the same terms they believe it hath a public spirit: if their belief of this latter be but conjectural, their assent unto the former can be no better. Seeing then they must of necessity grant (for this is the principal mark they aim at) that all must infallibly believe the church hath a public spirit, the difficulty removes to this point, How this infallible persuasion is or may
379 be wrought in them. Either it must be grounded upon scriptures, or not; avouched unto them and wrought in their hearts it must be, either by a public or private spirit. Let us examine all the parts of this division.

6. First, if private men's infallible persuasion of the church's public or authentic spirit be not grounded upon scriptures acknowledged by us and them, the church's authority, without all controversy, is much greater than the authority of scriptures; if it by this assertion can be any, and the church's not all in all. For unto that which men cannot know whether it be true or false, they cannot be bound to yield absolute or immediate obedience; unto that authority which they absolutely believe as infallible, they are bound to yield infallible assent and absolute obedience, directly, in itself and for itself. But by this supposition men cannot know scriptures infallibly without the church's authority, and yet they must infallibly believe the church's authority without scriptures; the scriptures' authority therefore is either less than the church's, or none at all.

7. But be it supposed that private men's infallible

belief of the church's public spirit is grounded upon scriptures, acknowledged by us and urged by them to this purpose; as upon these—*It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and us—I have prayed for thee thy faith should not fail*—the question whereunto we demand an answer is, Whether this infallible belief of the church's authority grounded upon these places must be wrought in men's hearts by a private or public spirit? If by a private spirit only Bellarmine believed the church's public spirit, or those scriptures' truth, or true meaning, whereon he grounds it; he and all other papists, (such as he was when he delivered this doctrine,) neither bishops nor cardinals, are subject to the same inconveniences which he hath condemned us for as heretics. For all private spirits, by his positions, are obnoxious to error, unsufficient to plant any infallible persuasion in matters of faith; yet such is this article of the church's authentic spirit, of which unless men be so persuaded, infallibly persuaded they cannot be of the minor proposition in any syllogism wherein a point of faith is concluded; and uncertain of the minor, they cannot be certain of the conclusion, which, as Bellarmine rightly observes, always follows the weaker part. The infallible conclusion therefore of Bellarmine's resolution is—Unless private men may have public spirits, to warrant the truth of scriptures, and the church's infallibility thereon grounded, they cannot truly believe any conclusion of faith. It remains then we inquire, what inconvenience will follow if they admit private men to be partakers of public spirits.

8. Diversity of such spirits they acknowledge not. If therefore private men's infallible assent unto the truth or true sense of those particular scriptures, whence they seek to prove their church's infallibility, must be

planted by a public spirit, planted it must be by the same spirit which guides, and guiding makes the church and pope authentic and infallible, both in their proposal of scriptures and declaration of scriptures' sense. Seeing this spirit is one and the same, if it can make the church or pope infallible in all, why may it not make all private men (by this supposition partakers of it) alike infallible, at the least in the right understanding of those places which warrant the church's infallibility or public spirit. For our adversaries, I hope, will easily grant, that the church's public and authentic spirit must be most infallibly believed, because so expressly taught in those scriptures cited by Bellarmine to this purpose. If this public or authentic spirit can work such infallible apprehension of those places' true meaning in private hearts, why not in all others as necessary for them to know, that is, in all necessary to salvation? And if thus it do, why are we bound to believe the pope more than the pope us, we being partakers of a public and infallible spirit as well as he?

9. Or if they hold it no absurdity to say, we must believe two or three places (*It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and us—Peter, feed my sheep*) by a public and authentic spirit, teaching us from these to rely upon the pope in all other parts of God's word, because (as it must be supposed) we have but a private spirit for their assurance; by this supposition the pope's authority, in respect of us, must have the same excess of superiority unto scriptures that a public spirit hath unto a private, or the pope (who believeth all scriptures by a public spirit) hath unto a private man. This public spirit, whereof they vaunt, is the same which did inspire the scriptures to Moses, the prophets, and apostles; and must (by this position) be

the pope or church's immediate agent for establishing this inviolable league of absolute allegiance with men's souls unto them, but of none so absolute to their Creator and Redeemer; and the rest of whose written laws and eternal decrees must be communicated unto them by a private spirit, and subscribed unto with this condition—If the pope shall witness them to be his laws, or to have this or that meaning.

10. Nor can our adversaries deny the truth of this subsequent collection—"If it were possible for the pope in matters controverted to teach contrary to God's word, we were bound to follow him;" for they themselves argue thus^z—If the pope could err in matters of faith, faith might perish from the earth: all Christians bound to err, because bound to obey him. This proves that our assent to any scriptures (besides those which teach the pope's authority) cannot in itself be perfect and absolute, but subject to this condition—If the pope be infallible. And even of those places which (as they pretend) witness him to be such, there yet remains a further difficulty. These the pope believes not because they are confirmed to him by his predecessor, but directly and immediately by his public spirit. But may private men believe them so too? No: for these especially, and the church's infallibility contained in them^a, are (by all our adversaries' consent)

^z Si volunt, pontificem, in rebus alioqui omnino controversis, id est, non satis expresse in ecclesia compertis, ac determinatis, definire posse, ut personam publicam, errorem re ipsa contra fidem: errant ipsi in fide gravissime. Posset enim, imo teneretur tunc ecclesia universa pontificem de re controversa docentem, ac nondum hæresi manifeste notatum, pro pastore suo agno-

scere, atque adeo ipsum omnino audire. Ita fieret ut si tunc errare possit, ecclesia etiam universa possit, imo teneretur errare. Valentian. tom. 3. de object. Fid. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. paragraph. 40. Bellarmine from the same grounds collects, that the pope cannot err in matters of manners.

^a Vide lib. 2. cap. 30. paragraph. 14. Nam fides catholica

propositions of faith, in respect of us, and need (by
 381 their doctrine) the proposal or testimony of the church,
 whereon all private men's faith must be immediately
 grounded; believing this, we shall from it (at least
 conjoined with scripture) believe all other parts of
 God's word necessary to salvation, as well as the pope
 doth these former from the testimony of his public
 spirit. Wherefore his authority must be unto us alto-
 gether as great as the authority of the Godhead is
 unto him; which is far greater unto him than it is
 or can be to any others; for even that which is ac-
 knowledged for God's word, both by him and us, must
 be less authentic unto us than the words of this mortal
 man.

11. For though we pardon our adversaries their
 former absurdities, in seeking to prove the church's
 authority by the scripture, and the scripture's by the
 church's; though we grant them all they can desire,
 (even what shall appear in due place to be most false,) *That*
whiles they believe the pope's particular injunc-
tions or decisions, from a presupposal of his universal
transcendent authority, they do not only believe him
or his words, but those parts of God's word upon
which they seem to ground his infallibility: yet our
former argument holds still most firm; because that
absolute assent, which private men must give unto the
supposed grounds of their religion before other por-
tions of scripture, is not grounded upon any preemi-

docet, omnem virtutem esse bonam, omne vitium esse malum, si autem papa erraret præcipiendo vitia vel prohibendo virtutes, *teneretur ecclesia credere vitia esse bona, et virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare. Tenetur enim in rebus dubiis ecclesia acquiescere judi-*

cio summi pontificis, et facere quod ille præcipit, non facere quod ille prohibet, ac ne forte contra conscientiam agat, tenetur credere bonum esse, quod ille præcipit, malum, quod ille prohibet. Bellarm. lib. 4. de Roman. Pont. cap. 5.

nency incident to these words as they are God's, as if they were more his than the rest, in some such peculiar sort as the Ten Commandments are in respect of other Mosaical laws; nor from any internal propriety flowing from the words themselves, as if their secret character did unto faithful minds bewray them to be more divine than others; nor from any precedent, consequent, or comitant circumstance, probably arguing that sense the Romish church gives of them to be of itself more perspicuous or credible than the natural meaning of most other scriptures, all inspired by one and the same Spirit, all, for their form, of equal authority and perspicuity. All the prerogative then which these passages can have before others must be from the matter contained in them; and that, by our adversaries' position, is the church's infallibility. Wherefore, not because they are God's word, or were given by his Spirit in more extraordinary sort than others, but because they have more affinity with the Roman lord, in late years *exalted above all that is called God*, Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, these places above cited must be more authentically believed than all the words of God besides. As I have read of pictures, though not more artificial in themselves, yet held in greater estimation amongst the heathen, and freer from contemptuous censure than any other of the same painter's doing, only because they represented their great god Jupiter.

12. Another difficulty whereunto we demand an answer is, whether, whiles they assent, as they profess, not only to the infallibility taught (as they suppose) in the forecited places, but also unto the infallibility of scriptures which teach it, they acknowledge two distinct assents, or but one. If but one, let them shew us how possibly the church can be said to confirm the scriptures; if two, let them assign the several proper-

ties of either ; whether is more strong ; whether must be to the other as Peter to his brethren ; or if neither
 382 of them can confirm the other, let them declare how the one can be imagined as a mean or condition of believing the other.

13. An heretic's belief of the minor proposition in the former syllogism (saith Bellarmine) is but weak ; a Romanist's belief of the same most strong. Let this be the minor, *Peter, feed my sheep* ; or, *Peter, I have prayed that thy faith should not fail* : what reason can be imagined, why a Romanist's belief of these propositions should be so strong, and ours so weak ? The one hath the church's authority to confirm his faith, the other hath not. What is it then to have the church's authority ? only to know her decrees concerning those portions of scriptures ? If this were all, we know the Romish church's decrees as well as the Romanists : but it is nothing to know them, if we do not acknowledge them. To have the church's authority, then, is to believe it as infallible ; and for this reason is a Roman catholic's belief of any portion of scripture more certain and strong, because he hath the testimony of the church, which he believes to be most infallible ; and believing it most infallibly, he must of necessity believe that to be scripture, that in every place to be the meaning of the Holy Ghost, which this church commends unto him for such. Let the most learned of our adversaries here resolve the doubt proposed ; Whether there be two distinct assents in the belief of the forementioned propositions ; one unto the truth of the proposition itself, and another unto the church's infallibility. It is evident by Bellarmine's opinion, that all the certainty a Roman catholic hath above a sectary is from the church's infallibility. For the proposition itself he can believe no better than a heretic

may, unless he better believe the church, i. e. believe the church's exposition of it, or the church's infallibility concerning it, better than the proposition itself, in itself and for itself. And so it is evident that the church's authority is greater because it must be better believed.

14. Suppose then one of our church which believes these propositions to be the word of God should turn Roman catholic, his former belief is by this means become more strong and certain. This granted, the next question is, what should be the object of this his strong belief? the proposition believed—*Peter, feed my sheep—I have prayed for thee*—or any other part of God's written word, or the church's authority? Not the propositions themselves, but only by accident, inasmuch as the church confirms them to him. For suppose the same man should eftsoons either altogether revolt from that church, or doubt of her authority, his belief of the former propositions becomes hereby as weak as it was before; which plainly evinceth, that his belief of the church and this proposition were two distinct beliefs, and that this strong belief was fastened unto the church's authority, not unto the proposition itself immediately, but only by accident, inasmuch as the church, which he believeth so firmly, did teach it; for his belief, if fastened upon the proposition itself, after doubt moved of the church's authority, would have continued the same; but now, (by Bellarmine's assertion,) as soon as he begins to disclaim his belief of the church's infallibility, his former strong belief of the supposed proposition begins to fail, and of this failing no other reason, than already is, can be assigned. The reason was, because the true, direct, and proper object of his strong belief was the church's authority, on which the belief of the proposition did

entirely depend, as the conclusion doth upon the premises, or rather as every particular doth on the universal, whereunto it is essentially subordinate.

CHAP. IV.

Containing a further Resolution of Romish Faith, necessarily inferring the Authority of the Romish Church to be of greater Authority than God's Word absolutely, not only in respect of us.

1. If we rack the former syllogism a little further, and stretch it out in every joint to its full length, we may quickly make it confess our proposed conclusion and somewhat more. The syllogism was thus: Whatsoever God hath spoken is most true: but God hath spoken and caused to be written all those words contained in the canon of scriptures, acknowledged by opposite religions of these times: therefore these words are most true. The certainty of the minor depends, as our adversaries will have it, upon the present Romish church's infallibility, which hath commended unto us these books for God's word. Be it then granted, for disputation's sake, that we cannot know any part of God's word, much less the just bounds, extent, or limits of all his words supposed to be revealed for our good, but by the Romish church; the spiritual sense or true meaning of all, most, or many parts of these determinate volumes and visible characters, as yet is undeterminate and uncertain; whereas all points of belief must be grounded on the determinate and certain sense of some part of God's word revealed; for our adversaries acknowledge all points of faith should be resolved into the first truth. Hence, if we descend to any particular or determinate conclusion of faith, it must be gathered in this syllogism: Whatsoever the church teacheth concerning the determinate and true sense of

scriptures, whereon points of faith are grounded, is most true: but the church teacheth thus and thus: (for example; that her own authority is infallibly taught by the Holy Ghost in these words—*Peter, feed my sheep—Peter, I have prayed for thee that thy faith should not fail* :) *ergo*, this sense and meaning of these words is most true. And as true as it is, must the sense likewise of every proposition, or part of scripture by this church expounded or declared, be accounted.

2. The major proposition of this syllogism is as undoubted amongst the Roman catholics, as the major of the former was unto all Christians: but as yet, the minor—The church doth give this or that sense of this or that determinate place—may be as uncertain indeed as they would make our belief unto the minor proposition in the general syllogism before it be confirmed by the church's authority. For how can we be certain that the church doth teach all those particulars which the Jesuits propose unto us? We have books indeed which go under the name of the Trent council, but how shall we know that this council was lawfully assembled, that some canons have not been foisted in by private spirits, that the council left not some unwritten tradition for explicating their decrees after another fashion than the Jesuits do? Who shall 384 assure us in these or like doubts?—The present church? All of us cannot repair to Rome; such as can, when they come thither, cannot be sure to hear the true church speak *ex cathedra*. If the pope send his writs to us assure, what critic so cunning as to assure us whether they be authentic or counterfeit? Finally, for all that can be imagined in this case, only the major of the catholic syllogism indefinitely taken is certain; and consequently no particular or definite conclusion of

faith can be certain to a Romanist, because there are no possible means of ascertaining the minor (what the true church doth infallible define) unto his conscience.

Wherein
the papists
make the
pope's au-
thority
greater
than God's.

3. Or if they will hold such conclusions as are ordinarily gathered from the Trent council, or the pope's decisions, as infallible points of faith ; they make their authority to be far greater than the infallibility of God's written word ; yea, more infallible than the Deity. This collection they would deny, unless it followed from their own premises ; these for example—That a conclusion of faith cannot be gathered, unless the minor—God did say this or that determinately—be first made certain. But from the pope or church's infallibility conclusions of faith may be gathered, albeit the minor be not certain *de fide*. For who can make a Jesuit's report of the pope's decrees, or an historical relation of the Trent council, certain *de fide*, as certain as an article of faith ? and yet the doctrine of the Trent council and pope's decrees must be held *de fide* upon pain of damnation, albeit men take them only from a priest's mouth or upon a Jesuit's faith and credit.

4. This is the madness of that Antichristian synagogue, that acknowledgeth God's word for most infallible, (and the scriptures, which we have, for his word, if itself be infallible ; for it tells us they are such,) yet will not have collections or conclusions with equal probability deduced thence, so firmly believed by private men, as the collections or conclusions which are gathered from the church's infallibility. And implicit faith of particulars, grounded upon the church's general infallibility, so men steadfastly believe it, may suffice. But implicit faith of particulars, grounded only upon our general belief of God's infallibility, providence, or written word, sufficeth not. This proves the authority of

the church to be above the authority of scriptures, or the Deity, absolutely considered, not only in respect of us (that is, all besides the pope and his cardinals). For that is of more authority absolutely, not only in respect of us, which upon equal notice or knowledge is to be better believed, more esteemed, or obeyed ; but such is the authority of the church in respect of the Divine authority ; such is the authority of the pope's decrees in respect of God's word. For the minor proposition in both the former syllogisms being alike uncertain, the conclusion must be more certain in that syllogism whose major relies upon the pope's infallibility, than in the other, whose major was grounded upon the infallibility of the Deity.

5. Briefly, to collect the sum of all—The authority of the church is greater than the authority of scriptures, both in respect of faith and Christian obedience. In respect of faith ; because we are bound to believe the church's decisions, read or explicated unto us, (by the pope's messenger, though a sir John Lack-latin,) without any appeal ; but no part of scripture, acknow-385
ledged by us and them, we may believe, without appeal, or submission of our interpretation to the church, albeit the true sense and meaning of it seem never so plain unto private consciences in whom God's Spirit worketh faith. The same argument is most firm and evident in respect of obedience.

6. That authority over us is always greatest unto which we are to yield most immediate, most strict and absolute obedience : but by the Romish church's doctrine, we are to yield supreme and most absolute obedience to the church ; more supreme and absolute than unto God's word : therefore the authority of the church is greater over us. The major is out of controversy, seeing greatness of authority is always measured by

the manner of obedience due unto it. The minor is as evident from the former reason: Our obedience is more absolute and strict unto that authority from which in no case we may appeal, than unto that from which we may in many safely appeal: but by the Romish church's doctrine, there lies always an appeal from that sense and meaning of scripture which God's Spirit and our own consciences give us, unto the church's authority; none, from the church's authority or meaning unto the scriptures, or our own consciences.

7. Our Saviour Christ bids us *search the scriptures*^b; St. Paul, *Try all, retain that which is good*^c; St. John, *Try the spirits, whether they be of God or no*^d: suppose a minister of our church should charge a Romanist, upon his allegiance to our Saviour Christ, and that obedience which he owes unto God's word, to search scriptures, try spirits, and examine doctrines for the ratifying of his faith; he will not acknowledge this to be a commandment of scripture, or at least not to be understood in such a sense as may bind him to this practice. What follows? If our clergy charge him to admit it, he appeals unto the church; and as in schools, *simus* and *nasus simus* is all one, so in their language is *the church* and *the church of Rome*. This church tells him, he may not take upon him to try of what spirit the pope is, nor examine his determinations, decisions, or interpretations of any scripture, by other known places of scripture, or the analogy of faith acknowledged by all. Unto this decree or sentence of the church (although he have it but at the second hand, or after it have passed through as many priests' and Jesuits' mouths as are post towns from London to Edinburgh) he yields absolute obe-

^b John v. 39.^c 1 Thess. v. 21.^d 1 John iv. 1.

dience, without acknowledgment of further appeal, either unto scriptures or other authority whatsoever; further manifestation of God's will he expects none. Let all the reformed churches in the world, or all the Christian world besides, exhort, threaten, or adjure him, as he tenders the good of his own soul, as he will answer his Redeemer in that dreadful day of final judgment, to examine the church or pope's decrees by God's written laws: his answer is, he may not, he cannot do it, without open disobedience to the church, which to disobey is damnation of soul and body. But, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe and obey from the heart that doctrine whereunto ye were delivered! Know ye not, that to whomsoever ye give yourselves as servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether it be the man of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness?* Of all mankind are only Roman catholics not bought with a price, that they 386 may thus alienate their souls from Christ, and become servants of men! that they may consecrate themselves by solemn vow to the perpetual slavery of most wicked and sinful men, even monsters of mankind!

CHAP. V.

That in obeying the Romish Church's Decrees we do not obey God's Word as well as them, but them alone in contempt of God's principal Laws.

1. BUT the simple (I know) are borne in hand by the more subtle sort of this generation—that thus obeying sinful men they obey Christ, who hath enjoined them this obedience unto such—that thus believing that sense of scripture which the church their mother tenders unto them, they do not believe her better than scriptures, because these two beliefs are not opposite, but subordinate—that they prefer not her decrees be-

fore Christ's written laws, but her interpretation of them before all private expositions. This is the only city of refuge left them, wherein, prosecuted by the former arguments, they can hope for any succour; but most of whose gates already have been, all shortly shall be, shut upon them.

The gross impiety of the Romish church, in binding men to believe negatives; without any tolerable exposition of those scriptures, which seem to contradict her decrees, in matters damnable to adventure upon without evidence of truth on her part.

2. That they neither believe nor obey God's word whilst they absolutely believe and obey the church without appeal, is evident, in that this church usually binds men, not unto positive points of religion gathered so much as from any pretended sense of scripture expounded by it, but to believe bare negatives; as, that this or that place of scripture, either brought by their adversaries, or conceived by such amongst themselves as desire the knowledge of truth and right information of conscience, have no such meaning as the Spirit of God, not flesh and blood, (as far as they can judge of their own thoughts,) hath revealed unto them.

3. But the Spirit may deceive private men; or, at least, they may deceive themselves in their trial of spirits. They may indeed; and so may men in public place more grievously err in peremptory judging private men (because obnoxious to error in the general) erroneous in this particular, wherein they ground their opinions upon God's word, plentiful to evince it (at least) very probable reasons they bring many and strong, whereunto no reasonable answer is brought by their adversaries, whose usual course is, to press them only with the church's authority; which appears to be of far greater weight than God's word unto all such as yield obedience to her negative decrees without any evidence or probability, either of scripture or natural reason, to set against that sense and meaning of God's laws, whereunto strength of arguments unrefuted, and probable pledges of God's Spirit undisproved, have

long tied their souls. Do we obey God, or believe his word, whilst we yield obedience to the church in such commandments as to our consciences, upon impartial examination, seem condemned (ere made) by the very fundamental laws of religion, and all this oftentimes without any show or pretence of scripture, to warrant us that we do not disobey God in obeying them?

4. But doth the Romish exact absolute obedience,³⁸⁷ (in such points as, if it were possible they could be false, may endanger the very foundation of true religion,) without evident demonstration that their daily practice neither doth nor can endanger it? Yes. For what can more concern the main foundation (which Christians, Jews, and Mahometans most firmly hold) than those precepts in number many, all plainly and peremptorily forbidding us to worship any gods but one, or any thing in the heaven or earth but him only? The Romanists themselves grant, that *cultu latriæ* God alone is to be adored, that so to adore any other is idolatry, and idolatry (by their confession) a most grievous sin. O how much better were it for them to hold it none, or God's word forbidding it of no authority, than so lightly to adventure the hourly practice of it (in contempt of such fearful threatenings as they themselves out of God's laws pronounce against it) upon such broken, disjointed surmises, as are the best they can pretend for their warrant^e!

5. To believe Christ's flesh and blood should be there present where it cannot be seen or felt, yea

^e The fearful dangers whereunto men's souls are exposed by the Trent council's decree for worshipping the consecrated host; for to adventure on such practices with any scruple or doubt is damnable, because contrary to the doctrine of faith. And yet to enforce a belief upon ourselves that Christ is there present, without warrant of scripture, is more damnable; for this were to affect ignorance for cloaking idolatry. See lib. 2. chap. 7.

where we see and feel another body as perfectly as we can do aught, is to reason, without warrant of scripture, but a senseless blind belief. But grant his body and blood were in the sacrament rightly administered, yet that out of the sacrament either should be in the consecrated host whilst carried from town to town for solemn show more than for sacramental use, is to reason ruled by scripture (to say no worse) more improbable. Now to worship that as God, which to our unerring senses is a creature, upon such blind supposals, that Christ's body, by one miracle, may be there—by another, unseen—is worse than idolatry committed upon delusion of sense. So to adore a wafer, only a wafer in all appearance, without strict examination, nay without infallible evidence of scriptures urged for the real presence, is more abominable than to worship every appearance of an angel of light, without trial what spirit it were—Satan or some other—that so appeared. And if we consider the old serpent's usual sleight to insinuate himself into every place, wherein inveterate custom or corrupt affection may suggest some likelihood of a Divine presence unto dreaming fancies, (as he did delude the old world in oracles and idols,) the probability is far greater his invisible substance (by nature not incompatible with any corporeal quantity) should be annexed to the supposed host, than Christ's real body, incapable for any thing we know of joint existence in the same place with any other; howsoever, most disproportionable to such base effects as must proceed from the substance contained under the visible shape of bread, such as no accident could either breed or support.

6. This is a point (as is elsewhere observed) wherein Satan seemeth to triumph over the modern papists, more than over all the heathens of the old world, whose

senses only he deluded, or bewitched their reason, but quite inverts all use of these men's sense, faith, and reason, making them believe Christ's body to be present in the sacrament, after a supposed miraculous manner, quite contrary to the known nature of bodies, and yet more preposterously contrary to the very end 388 and essence of miracles. For what miracles were ever wrought to other purpose, than to convince the imperfect collections of human reason by evidence of sense, God using this inferior or brutish part (thus astonished by his presence) to confute the curious folly of the superior or divine faculty of the soul, as he did sometimes the dumb ass to rebuke the iniquity of the prophet her master. But so preposterously doth Satan ride the modern papist, that he is brought to believe a multitude of miracles, against the evidence of sense or reason, contrary to the rule of faith; all offered up in sacrifice unto the prince of darkness; that, he having put out the eyes of sense, reason, and spirit at once, may ever after lead them what way he list. And as unhappy wags or lewd companions may persuade blind men to beg an alms, as if some great personage did, whenas a troop of more needy beggars than themselves pass by; so is it much to be dreaded, lest the Devil persuade the blinded besotted papist, that Christ is present where he himself lies hid; that he may with heart and soul offer up those prayers and duties unto him which belong properly unto God; and worship in such manner before the boxes whereinto he hath secretly conveyed himself, as the Israelites did before the ark of the covenant.

7. Vasquez^f thinks we may without offence adore that body wherein the Devil lurks, so we direct not

^f Vasquez in part. 3. Thomæ 33. et tom. 2. disp. 209. cap. 4. tom. 1. disput. 110. cap. 5. num. 41.

our worship unto him, but to the inanimate creature, as representing the Creator. Suppose this might be granted upon some rare accident, or extraordinary manifestation of God's power in some particular place, in case men were ignorant, or had no just presumptions of any malignant spirit's presence therein; yet were it damnable idolatry daily to practise the like, especially where great probability were of diabolical imposture, which the solemn worship of any creature, without express warrant of scripture, will invite. Yet sense doth witness that Christ is not, no scripture doth warrant us that he or any other living creature, unless perhaps worms^g, or such as spring of putrefaction, is present, in their processions. Notwithstanding all the express commandments of God brought by us against their practice, the Trent council^h accurseth all that deny Christ's real presence in procession, or condemn the proposal of that consecrated substance to be publicly adored as God; not so much as intimating any tolerable exposition of that commandment, which forbids us to have any gods but one.

The impious decree
of the Trent

8. To omit many more; another instance, suitable to the former and our present purpose, we have in the

^g The known experiments of such creatures, arising from corruption of their consecrated host, have enforced the schoolmen to invent new miracles how they should come there. Some think *per creationem novæ materiæ primæ*; others, that the quantity of the late deceased consecrated host *supplet locum materiæ primæ*; which, as Pererius thinks, is the greatest of all the nine miracles about transubstantiation. See Pererius, disput. 16. in cap. vi. Joan.; et Suarez, Metaphys. disp. 20. sect. 5. num. 13.

^h Si quis dixerit, in sancto eucharistiæ sacramento Christum unigenitum Dei filium non esse cultu latriæ, etiam externo, adorandum, atque ideo nec festiva peculiari celebritate venerandum, neque in processionibus, secundum laudabilem et universalem ecclesiæ sanctæ ritum et consuetudinem, solemniter circumgestandum; vel non publice, ut adoretur, populo proponendum, et ejus adoratores esse idololatrias; anathema sit. Concil. Trid. sess. 13. can. 6.

decree of communicating under one kind. Our Saviour at his institution of this sacrament gave the cup as well as the bread, and with the cup alone this express injunction, “*Bibite ex hoc omnes,*” *Drink all of this*, albeit none of his disciples were conficients, or such as did consecrate. St. Paul recites the same institution in like words, and continued the practice in such churches as he planted. The Trent councilⁱ acknowledgeth that the use of the cup was not infrequent or unusual in the primitive church; indeed altogether usual, and the want of it for many hundred years after Christ unknown. The only instance that can from antiquity be pretended to prove it lawful, and which in all likelihood did partly occasion it, argues the ancients’ use of it in solemn assemblies to have been held as necessary. For even in cases of greatest necessity, when the cup could not be carried to parties sick, or otherwise detained from public communions, they had the consecrated bread dipped in it. And Gregory of Tours^k relates the poisoning of king Clovis’ sister (queen to Theodoric) by her own daughter, in the chalice, so as he intimates withal the ordinary use of the cup at that time, as well amongst French catholics as Italian Arrians. Only this was the difference; the Arrians did not, as the catholics, drink of the same cup with their princes.

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ⁱ Sess. 21. cap. 2.

^k Erant autem sub Arriana secta viventes: et quia consuetudo eorum est, ut ad altare venientes, de alio calice reges communicent et de alio populus minor, venenum in calice illo posuit, de quo mater communicatura erat. Quo illa hausto, protinus mortua est, non enim dubium est tale maleficium esse

de parte Diaboli. Quid contra hæc miseri hæretici respondebunt, ut in sancta eorum locum habeat inimicus? Nos vero Trinitatem in una æqualitate pariter et omnipotentia confitentes, etiamsi mortiferum bibamus, in nomine Patris et Spiritus Sancti veri et incorruptibilis Dei, nihil nos nocebit. Greg. Turon. Hist. lib. 3. cap. 31.

9. It may be, fear, conceived upon this or like example, lest the priests should in a more proper sense prove conficients, not of Christ's, but of lay-princes' bodies, made them afterwards more willing to forbear the cup; and the people either in manners would not, or otherwise could not, be advanced above them at this heavenly banquet. Turonensis' reason against these heretics, I think, did hold no longer than his life; few princes afterwards durst have adventured to try the truth of his conclusion, (whether poison drunk in the sacrament administered by the supposed true church would have wrought;) for, unless my memory fail me, ecclesiastic princes, popes themselves, have been as surely poisoned in catholic chalices, as the forementioned queen was in the Arrian cup.

10. But what occasions soever either moved the laity of themselves to embrace, or the clergy to enjoin this communion under one kind, the Trent council¹

¹ Concil. Trid. sess. 21. cap. 1. Itaque sancta ipsa synodus, a Spiritu Sancto, qui spiritus est sapientiæ, et intellectus, spiritus consilii et pietatis, edocta, atque ipsius ecclesiæ judicium et consuetudinem secuta, declarat ac docet; Nullo divino præcepto laicos, et clericos non conficientes, obligari ad eucharistiæ sacramentum sub utraque specie sumendum; neque ullo pacto, salva fide, dubitari posse, quin illis alterius speciei communio ad salutem sufficiat. Nam etsi Christus Dominus in ultima cæna venerabile hoc sacramentum in panis et vini speciebus instituit, et apostolis tradidit; non tamen illa institutio et traditio eo tendunt, ut omnes Christi fideles statuto Domini ad utramque speciem accipiendam astringantur.

Sed neque ex sermone illo apud Johan. vi. recte colligitur, utriusque speciei communionem a Domino præceptam esse, utcumque juxta varias sanctorum Patrum et doctorum interpretationes intelligatur. Namque qui dixit, *Nisi manducaveritis carnem filii hominis, et biberitis ejus sanguinem, non habebitis vitam in vobis*; dixit quoque, *Siquis manducaverit ex hoc pane, vivet in æternum*. Et qui dixit, *Qui manducat meam carnem, et bibit meum sanguinem, habet vitam æternam*, dixit etiam, *Panis quem ego dabo, caro mea est pro mundi vita*. Et denique qui dixit, *Qui manducat meam carnem, et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ego in illo*; dixit nihilominus, *Qui manducat hunc panem vivit in æternum*.

specifies none, and yet accurseth all that will not believe the church had just causes so to do. Without any sure warrant of scripture to persuade it, they bind all likewise to believe this bare negative, That neither our Saviour's words at his institution of the sacrament, nor any other place of scripture, enjoin the use of the cup as necessary, by way of precept or commandment; nor doth Christ's words in the sixth of John, howsoever we understand them according to the diverse interpre- 390
tations of Fathers, (either of sacramental or spiritual eating,) enforce any such necessity. Will you hear their reasons for this bold assertion^m? He that said, *Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you*; said also, *If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever*. And he that said, *Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life*; said also, *The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*. He that said, *Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwells in me and I in him*; hath said withal, *He that eateth this bread shall live for ever*.

11. God's precepts must be very peremptory, and conceived in formal terms, ere any sufficient authority to enjoin obedience, in what subject soever, will be acknowledged in them by these men, that dare thus deny a necessity of communicating Christ in both kinds, imposed upon all in these words; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you*;

^m And in the second canon of the same session it is expressed, sub pœna anathematis: Si quis dixerit, Sanctam ecclesiam catholicam non justis causis et rationi-

bus adductam fuisse, ut laicos, atque etiam clericos non conficientes, sub panis tantummodo specie communicaret, aut in eo errasse; anathema sit.

only because it is said in the words going before, *If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.* Of how much better insight in scriptures, than these grand seers of Rome, would blind Homer, had he lived in their time, have proved ! for he never denied feigned gods their nectar, because ambrosia was an immortal meat. And would he, or any man not more blind in heart and mind than he was of bodily sense, collect, against Christ's express words, that his blood, the true heavenly nectar, was not necessary, because his flesh doth strengthen to eternal life, especially if he considered their captious interpellation against whom in that place he disputes, which caused him not to express his mind so fully there as elsewhere he had done, albeit afterwards he ingeminates the necessity of drinking his blood as well as eating his flesh in such precise and formal terms, as if he had even then bethought himself, that such Antichristian spirits as these Trent fathers might haply dare to elude his most sacred precept by such Satanical glosses, as in that decree they have done.

12. He had told the Jews (as much as was pertinent to their objection) that *he was the living bread which came down from heaven*: much better than manna, which their fathers had eaten. *Bread* he called himself in opposition unto *manna*, not restraining this to his body or flesh only ; albeit what he meant by bread, he expounds partly by his fleshⁿ, *And the*

ⁿ *Ista distinctio (saith Bellarmine) tam frequens carnis et sanguinis, et cibi ac potus, aperte indicat Christum loqui de communicatione sui sub speciebus panis et vini: alioqui enim quorsum ista distinctio, toties præsertim repetita? Spiritualis enim perceptio Christi per fidem, non*

eget ista distinctione, cum uno modo fiat: idem enim est manducare et bibere in sumptione per solam fidem. Bellar. lib. 1. de Sacrament. Euch. cap. 5. in hæc verba Johannis vi. Now if we assume, But the Romish church will not suffer Christians to receive Christ's body and blood

bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world; besides that *bread* in the Hebrew dialect contains all sorts of food, the manner of giving this ambrosia was such, as did afford heavenly visible nectar too. For whilst he gave his flesh upon the cross, he poured out his blood withal. But the Jews catch at this speech ere he had expounded his full meaning; *How can this man give us flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you* Which words, considered with the former circumstances, to any man's capacity not infatuate, import thus much: Do ye murmur that I should proffer you my ³⁹¹ flesh? Verily I say unto you, and ye may believe me, *Unless ye drink my blood, as well as eat my flesh, ye have no life in you.* For so he adds, *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*; that is, both are as necessary to eternal, as meat and drink to corporal life.

13. For these and many like reasons, necessarily arising from the text, some, as well of their greatest scholars as best interpreters, deny the former places to be meant of sacramental eating, otherwise unable to conceive any possibility, either of avoiding the inconveniences urged by us, or of defending their infallible church from error in this decree. Yet, saith the council, howsoever they be understood according to the diverse interpretations of Fathers, they infer no such necessity.—No? not if most Fathers, as Maldonate

sub speciebus panis et vini, the conclusion is inevitable, Therefore the Romish church directly contradicts Christ, and as much as in her lies deprives the laity of

eternal life. Our Saviour in the sixth of John speaks indefinitely both of sacramental and spiritual eating, not peculiarly of either.

contends, did hold them to be directly meant of sacramental eating? Why then did Jansenius and Hesselius renounce the Fathers in this? Surely to defend their mother, whose credit they have much better saved, upon supposition that these words are meant only of spiritual manducation, than Maldonate, otherwise acute, but most perversely sottish, in his apology for this decree, hath done. And yet, to speak the truth, the same inconvenience will follow as necessarily, though not so perspicuously at first sight, albeit we grant them to be meant of spiritual eating primarily. For in that they are meant primarily of spiritual, they cannot but be meant of sacramental eating also, seeing these two (as elsewhere I have observed) are not opposite, but subordinate^o. Whence if we grant that Christ's blood, as well as his flesh, must be communicated to us by faith, or spiritual manducation, the consequence will be, "Therefore the cup, as well as the bread, must be administered in the sacrament^p;" because Christ saith in the institution, that the cup is his blood, and the bread his body or flesh; that is, the one is the sure pledge or instrument whereby his flesh, the other whereby his blood, which we must spiritually eat, (as well in the sacrament as out of it,) must be communicated unto us. For, as the ancient Fathers have observed, our Saviour Christ did in his institution exhibit that unto us sensibly which before he had promised as invisible, so that the precept of eating Christ's body and drinking his blood sacramentally,

^o Vide Beza, Annotationes in vers. 63. cap. vi. Johan.

^p Quoniam res ipsa, id est, corporis et sanguinis Christi spiritualis manducatio et potus, ibi luculenter traditur, ad quam postea evangelistæ ad finem histo-

riæ suæ declarant Christum adjunxisse symbola externa panis et vini, idcirco nos caput illud a sacramento eucharistiæ non putamus esse alienum, Peter Martyr defens. ad Gardiner. de Eucharist. part. 1. solut. object. 32.

doth bind all capable of this sacrament as strictly, as that other of eating his body and drinking his blood spiritually; seeing this latter is the seal and assurance of the other. And as our adversaries acknowledge an absolute necessity of precept, for eating Christ sacramentally and spiritually, though that precept concern not infants; so in all reason they should grant an equal necessity of precept for eating his flesh and blood distinctly in the sacrament, though this be not necessary to all men at all times, if without negligence or contempt they cannot be partakers of both. For impossibility, upon what occasion soever, not caused through their own default, exempts them from that general precept of eating Christ under both kinds; as want of years or discretion doth children from any injunction, divine or human, of communicating so much as in one kind. For notwithstanding the former precept, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you*, as peremptory as any can be for communicating, as well sacramentally as spiritually, in both kinds; it were uncharitable to mistrust God's mercy towards such 392 poor souls as long for the cup of salvation, which no man giveth them; yea which the Romish church hath by decree, as peremptory as she could make, denied to all the laity without exception, to all the clergy except such as may by a peculiar right challenge his blood as their own, by way of exchange, because they have made him a body which he had not before.

14. Yet is it a small thing with this great whore to deprive the Christian world of the Lord's, unless she urge it, instead thereof, to pledge her in the cup of devils, full of the wine of fornication, coloured with her adulterate scriptures, authorized no doubt for such purposes. Where our apostle St. Paul saith, that he

The strange interpretation of St. Paul's words, whereby the Trent council, deluded by Satan, seeks to delude the Christian world.

and his ministers were *stewards of the mysteries of God*; the vulgar Roman edition renders the Greek *οικονόμους* by the Latin *dispensatores*, and *μυστηρίων* (rightly rendered in this place) elsewhere (upon carelessness, rather than any intention of harm, as I am persuaded) by the Latin *sacramentum*^q. Whether upon set purpose of some more learned in that council, presuming to gull the simple and illiterate by their cunning, as Chemnitius probably thinks; or whether *the mystery of iniquity* (as is more probable) wrought unawares in the brains of the ignorant, which were the major part, and, as some have related, did over-sway the learned incapable of such impudence as should give countenance to this ignominious decree; partly from the equivocation of the Latin *dispensatores*, partly from the synonymical signification which the vulgar hath made of *mysterium* and *sacramentum*, the beetle-heads have hammered out an interpretation of St. Paul's words before cited, so scurrilously contrary to his meaning, that the black dog, which is said to have appeared unto cardinal Crescentius, (might he have spoken in the council,) could scarce have uttered it without blushing^r. For the apostle meant such *dispensatores* or stewards as our Saviour speaks of in the four and twentieth of St. Matthew; such as should give their fellow-servants their just portions without purloining; such as daily expected their Master's return to call them unto a strict account of their stewardship.

^q Ephes. v. 32.

^r The improper use of which word in that place made matrimony a sacrament amongst the papists, yet Bellarmine defends the translation. *Idem esse mysterium Græcis et Latinis sacramentum; Græci enim cum de sacramentis agunt semper μυστήρια*

vocant. Bellarm. lib. 2. de Verbo Dei cap. 14. parag. sept. So oftentimes we call an ass a beast, but to translate *bestia* by the English *ass*, would argue either rudeness or negligence in the translator or the approver, partiality in the apologizer.

For so it is expressly added, *Moreover*, (or as much as belongs unto our office,) *it is required of stewards that they be all found faithful*, 1 Cor. iv. 2.

15. Not to dispute of the church's authority in disposing of sacraments, nor to exagitate the impiety of this decree, be the one for the present supposed as great, the other as little as they list to make it; only this I would demand of any that is so himself, Whether he can imagine any men sober or in their right minds would not as soon have urged that text, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*, for establishing atheism, or St. Peter's check unto Simon Magus, to prove simony lawful, as derive the church's authority for detaining the least part of the word of life, much less the cup of salvation, from these words, *Let a man so think of us as of the ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God*^s. What secrets? Of 393 the gospel, before hid, but now to be published to all the world; of which the same apostle elsewhere had said, *A necessity is laid upon me, and woe unto me if I preach it not*. Of the use or necessity of the Lord's cup not a word in this place, not a syllable, for the Lord had sent him, not to administer this sacrament, but to preach the gospel; of which the doctrine of the Lord's supper was a part indeed; but where expressly and directly he delivers that, doth he intimate by any circumstance that either it had been, was, or might be otherwise administered, than according to the pattern prescribed by our Saviour at the first institution? Rather his often repetition of these conjunctives—*this bread and this cup—eating and drinking—the body and blood*, &c.—argue he never thought the one should be received without the other; that this prohibition of the cup was a particular branch of the mystery of ini-

^s 1 Cor. iv. 1.

quity, not to break out till latter ages, hid from his eyes that had seen the mystery itself begin to work; *As often as ye shall eat this bread, (saith the apostle,) and drink this cup, ye shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink the cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man therefore examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation, because he discerneth not the Lord's body*^t. Yet unto the Trent council St. Paul in the former place, where he had no such occasion, as not speaking one word either of the doctrine, necessity, or use of the sacraments, seems to intimate, and that not obscurely, the church's authority in dispensing them as the Trent Fathers have done^u. What then, might every minister of Christ, every distributor of God's secrets, have used the like authority, before the church representative did, at least by tacit consent, approve the practice? This place doubtless proves either altogether nothing, or thus much, for the apostle's words are indefinite, for their literal sense, equally applicable to every faithful minister or private dispenser of such secrets; not appropriate to the entire public body ecclesiastic, or the capital or cardinal parts thereof. Of the Corin-

^t 1 Cor. xi. 26—28.

^u Præterea declarat hanc potestatem perpetuo in ecclesia fuisse, ut in sacramentorum dispensatione, salva illorum substantia, ea statueret, vel mutaret, quæ suscipientium utilitati seu ipsorum sacramentorum venerationi, pro rerum, temporum, et locorum varietate magis expedire judicaret. Id autem apostolus non obscure

visus est insinuasse, cum ait, *Sic nos existimet homo, ut ministros Christi et dispensatores mysteriorum Dei*, atque ipsum quidem hac potestate usum esse, satis constat, cum in multis aliis, tum in hoc ipso sacramento, cum ordinatis nonnullis circa ejus usum, 1 Cor. xi. 34. *cætera (inquit) cum venero disponam.* Concil. Trident. sess. 21. cap. 2.

thians, to whom he wrote, one said, *I am Paul's*, another, *I am Apollos'*, the third, *I am of Cephas* ; all boasting in the personal excellencies of their first parents in Christ, as the papists now do in St. Peter's and his successors' catholic primacy. To assuage these carnal humours in his children, their father, that great doctor of the Gentiles, seeks more in this than in any other place of all his Epistles, to debase himself, and diminish others' high esteem either of his own worth or of his calling : *Who is Paul then, and who is Apollos, but the ministers by whom ye have believed, and as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that gives the increase. And he that planteth and he that watereth are one, and every man shall receive his wages according to his labour. For we together are God's labourers : ye are God's husbandry and God's building*^x. And after a serious incitement of master-builders to fidelity, with the like admonition to God's husbandry or building,³⁹⁴ not to rejoice in men, he concludes as he had begun, *Let every man esteem us* (such as I have said) *ministers of Christ, and disposers of the mysteries of God.* Of whom were they so to esteem ? Of St. Paul himself, and every faithful minister. Doth he then intimate here any such prerogative above the meanest of his brethren, as the Romish clergy usurps over the whole Christian world ? any authority to prohibit, either the dispensers of God's mysteries from administering, or men so carnally minded as were these to whom he wrote, from communicating, Christ's blood as well as his body ? So the Trent Fathers think ; and as if for their wilful denial of the Lord's cup unto the people,

^x 1 Cor. iii. 5—9.

the Lord had given them the cup of giddiness, to cast them into a Babylonish slumber whilst they consulted about this decree, and their scribes through wretchlessness had written what their raving masters in their sickly or drunken dreams had uttered ; we find in the same decree another place of St. Paul immediately annexed, though as disproportionable to the former (as it is placed in their discourse) as a man's head to an horse's neck, both as unsuitable to their intended conclusion, as a superaddition of fins or feathers would be to such a monstrous hippocentaureic combination. The place is St. Paul's conclusion of that discourse concerning the sacraments, *Other things will I set in order when I come*ʒ.

16. Granting (what is not necessary) he spake of ordering matters concerning this sacrament ; to receive the wine as well as the bread was no part of their present disorder, whose misbehaviour at the Lord's table did minister more just occasions to St. Paul than long beards did to the council of Constance, to deny the use of the cup, might Christ's blood and body, which he hath jointly tendered to all, be upon any occasion justly severed by man in the administration of his last will and testament. Whatsoever the number or quality of the guests be, the great Lord's table must be always so furnished as it was at the first institution ; for he hath no respect of persons. If a rich stately prelate come in with a gold ring in goodly vestiments, and a poor honest laic in vile raiments, he saith not to him in pontifical robes, Come sit you here at my mess, where you may drink of my wine, as well as eat of my bread ; nor to the poor laic, Stand thou there apart, or sit down here under my footstool, where

thou mayest be partaker of the crumbs which fall from my table, though not of my cup, which must be kept for thy betters. High and low, rich and poor, all were redeemed with one price, all at this offering equal, all alike free to taste of every dish, so they come with wedding-garments, without which even the best must be cast out, as unworthy to taste of any part, if not of all. That part which the councils of Constance and Trent, upon pretences of reverence to the Lord's supper, have detained from modern Christians, the Corinthians had received unworthily; yet was not the cup, for this reason, held superfluous by St. Paul, who only sought to repress the abuse, as knowing the use of it to be most necessary. The matters then he meant to order, when he came, was, to set out this heavenly banquet with greater decency and solemnity, not to abridge them of any substantial or material part thereof.

17. Nor do the Trent Fathers, if we may trust them 395 upon their words^z. For they (desirous, as it seems, to make the whole Christian world as sottish as themselves were impious) would make men believe they could juggle away the cup, and never touch the very substance of the sacrament; as if the wine were not as substantial a part of the Lord's supper, as was his blood of his body, or humanity. An integral or material part they cannot deny it to be; and such if it be, their apology is as shameless, as if a man should let out most of another's blood, cut off his arm or leg, or maim him in some principal part, and plead for himself—I did not meddle with his substance, meaning (as the council, I take it, here doth) his essence, seeing he is yet as truly a reasonable creature as before.

^z Cited in the precedent annotation, parag. 15.

That the cup is an essential and substantial part of the eucharist.

18. But to debar them of that refuge, it may be they sought, or their followers may yet hope to find, in the equivocation of this word *substance*, importing as much sometimes as a material or integral, sometimes as an essential part. If the cup be an essential and substantial part of this sacrament, the council by their own confession did foully err in prohibiting communion under both kinds: if no such part it be, they might by their own rule have altogether denied the use of it so much as to the sacrificer, or conficiant: but so the very use and end on which the essence of the sacrament (as of all other matters of moral practice) immediately depends, and by whose expiration instantly must determine, should utterly have perished. The end and use of this sacred institution, as our Saviour expressly teacheth, and the council grants, was to represent the testator's death, yea so to represent it, as we might be partakers of his body and blood, not spiritually only, but withal (as the Trent Fathers contend) sacramentally. Admitting then all they can pretend against the necessity of the cup, "that whole Christ were in the bread alone;" yet this will not preserve the true and fruitful use of the sacrament, nor salve that deadly wound the essence of it must perforce receive from frustration of the end, necessarily ensuing the cup's absence. For this sacrament was ordained, as to represent, so to exhibit Christ's body unto all faithful communicants, not as entire and whole; his blood, not as it was enclosed in the veins; but the one as torn and rent, the other as shed and poured out upon the cross: *This is my blood of the new testament*, (saith our Saviour,) *which is shed for many* (for all that receive it faithfully) *for the remission of sins*. His blood then, as shed and poured out, is as the lodestar of penitent and contrite hearts,

whereon the eyes of their faith that seek remission of sins in this sacrament must be fastened: for (as the apostle saith^a) *without shedding of blood is no remission*. This was the complement of that inestimable all-sufficient sacrifice, that which represents his precious blood thus poured out, the principal part of this sacrament, as well in respect of representing his death, as in applying remission of sins thereby in general purchased, and by this sacramental type sealed to every one in particular; especially if the Trent council's doctrine be true, that Christ's very blood, which was shed upon the cross, is really present in the chalice, and might be as immediately sprinkled at least upon the lips or doors of every faithful receiver's heart, as the blood of the paschal lamb was upon the doorposts of 396 the Israelites. Thus as Satan the father of lies, so false opinions, suggested by him, draw men with pleasure into those evils, for whose practice in the end they become their chief accusers. That opinion which at first brought in neglect of the chalice, and, as the Trent council presumed, would have warranted them in making this decree, doth most condemn them; for the measure of their iniquity could not have been so fully accomplished, unless they had held a transubstantiation of the wine into Christ's blood.

19. What part of scripture can we presume they will spare, that dare thus countermand the most principal of all God's commandments? What reckoning may we think they make of our Saviour Christ, that adventure thus shamefully to disannul and cancel his last will and testament, defrauding almost the whole Christian world of half their Lord and Master's royal allowance, partly without any show of scriptures, either

^a Heb. ix. 22.

to restrain or otherwise interpret these sovereign precepts; partly upon such idle and frivolous allegations as may further witness their slight estimate of God's word, save only so far as it may be wrested to serve their turns.

That the Trent Fathers had preferred their own authority above the scriptures, albeit the scriptures they allege for this decree were as probable as these we bring against it.

20. But grant the places there alleged by the council did so mitigate either the form of the institution, or the peremptory manner of our Saviour's speeches in the sixth of John, as to make it disputable, in impartial judgments, whether they did plainly enjoin any necessity of communicating under both kinds; the former decree, notwithstanding, would manifestly infer an usurpation of sovereignty over God's word, quite contrary to the general analogy of faith, reason, and conscience; by all which, in cases doubtful, and, for the speculative form of truth, disputable with equal probability, affirmatively or negatively, we are taught to frame our choice when we come to practice, according to the difference of the matter, or of consequences which may ensue, more dreadful one way than the other, always to prefer either a greater good before a less, or a less evil before a greater, though both equally probable. Suppose then these two contradictory propositions—The denial of the cup is a mutilation of Christ's last will and testament—The denial of the cup is no mutilation of Christ's last will and testament—were, for their speculative probabilities, in just examination equipendent; yet the doctrine of faith delivered in scripture, reason, and conscience, without contradiction, instructs us, that to alter, abrogate, or mutilate the Son of God's last will and testament is a most grievous, most horrible, most dreadful sin; but to permit the use of the chalice hath no suspicion of any the least evil in it. Had the Trent Fathers thus done, they had done no worse than our Saviour, than his apostles,

than the primitive church (by their own confession^b) did. This excess of evil, without all hope of any the least compensative good to follow upon the denial, should have swayed them to that practice, which was infinitely more safe, as not accompanied with any possibility or show of danger; although the speculative probability of any divine precept necessarily enjoining the use of the cup had been none. Thus peremptorily to adventure upon consequences so fearful, whereto no contrary fear could in reason impel, nor hopes any way comparable allure them; thus imperiously to de-397prive the whole Christian world of a good, in their valuation (testified by their humble supplications and frequent embassages to that council) so inestimable, without any other good possible to redound unto the deniers, save only usurpation of lordly dominion over Christ's heritage, plainly evinceth, that the church is of far greater authority with them than God's word, either written in the sacred canon or their hearts; than all his laws, either engrafted by nature, or positive and supernatural. For,

21. Admit this church representative had been fully persuaded in conscience rightly examined, and immediately ruled by scripture, that the former decree did not prejudice the institution, use, or end of this sacrament; yet most Christians' earnest desire of the cup, so publicly testified, could not suffer them to sleep in ignorance of that great scandal the denial of it needs must give to most inferior particular churches. Wherefore the rule of charity that moved the Father of the Gentiles to that serious protestation, *If meat offend my brother, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, that I may not offend my brother*^c, should in all

^b Sess. 21. cap. 2.

œcumenica et generalis Triden-

^c 1 Cor. viii. 13. Sacrosancta tina synodus, in Spiritu Sancto

equity, divine or human, have wrought these prelates' hearts to like profession; if want of their spiritual drink offend so many congregations, and such a multitude of our brethren, we will rather not use our lawful authority acknowledged by all, than usurp any that may be offensive or suspicious unto others, though apparently just unto ourselves: for they could not be more fully persuaded this decree was just, than St. Paul was that all meats were lawful to him.

22. But may we think these prelates had no scruple of conscience, whether the very form of this decree were not against our Saviour's express command, "*Bibite ex hoc omnes,*" *Drink ye all of this*^d: for mine own part, whiles I call to mind what elsewhere I have observed, that the Jews were never so peremptory in their despiteful censures of our Saviour's doctrine, nor so outrageously bent against his person, as when their hearts were touched in part with his miracles, or in some degree illuminated with the truth he taught; the council's extraordinary forwardness to terrify all contravenaries of this decree, makes me suspect they were too conscious of their own shallow pretended proofs to elude God's word, whose light and perspicuity in this point had exasperated their hardened hearts and weak-sighted faith, to be so outrageous in the very beginning of that session, as if they had

legitime congregata, præsidentibus in ea eisdem apostolicæ sedis legatis, cum de tremendo et sanctissimo eucharistiæ sacramento varia diversis in locis... errorum monstra nequissimi dæmonis artibus circumferantur, ob quæ in nonnullis provinciis multi a catholicæ ecclesiæ fide atque obedientia videantur discessisse; Censuit, ea quæ ad communionem

sub utraque specie, et parvulorum pertinent, hoc loco exponenda esse: quapropter cunctis Christi fidelibus interdicit, ne posthac de iis aliter vel credere vel docere vel prædicare audeant quam est his decretis explicatum atque definitum.—Concil. Trid. Sess. 21. in Procæmio.

^d Matt. xxvi. 27.

meant to stifle their consciences and choke the truth, lest these haply might cross their proceedings or control their purposes, if this cause should once have come to sober and deliberate debatement. For as thieves oftentimes seek to avoid apprehension by crying loudest, Turn the thief! so these wolves hoped well to smother their guilt, and prevent all notice taking of their impiety, by their grievous exclamations against others' monstrous impious opinions in this point, interdicting all, upon penalty of the curses following, ere they had determined aught, to teach, preach, or believe otherwise than they meant to determine.

23. ^e Yet, though the council accurse all that hold communication under both kinds as a necessary doctrine, it doth not absolutely inhibit all use of the chalice, but leaves it free unto their lord the pope to grant it, upon what conditions he please, either unto private men or whole nations. Upon what conditions then, may we presume, will it please his holiness for to grant it? upon any better than Satan tendered all the kingdoms of the earth unto our Saviour? For this feigned

^e Cum sacrosancta synodus superiori sessione duos articulos, alias propositos, et tum nondum discussos; videlicet, An rationes, quibus s. catholica ecclesia adducta fuit, ut communicaret laicos, atque etiam non celebrantes sacerdotes, sub una panis specie, ita sint retinendæ, ut nulla ratione calicis usus cuiquam sit permittendus: et, An, si honestis et Christianæ charitati consentaneis rationibus concedendus alicui vel nationi vel regno calicis usus videatur, sub aliquibus conditionibus concedendus sit, et quænam illæ sint, in aliud tem-

pus, oblata sibi occasione, examinandas, atque definiendas reservaverit; nunc, eorum, pro quibus petitur, saluti optime consultum volens, decrevit, integrum negotium ad sanctissimum Dominum nostrum esse referendum, prout præsentî decreto refert, qui pro sua singulari prudentia id efficiat, quod utile reipublicæ Christianæ et salutare petentibus usum calicis fore judicaverit.—Concil. Trident. vicesima secunda sessione, in decreto super petit. de concessione calicis.

servant of Christ, a true Gehazi, repining at his Lord and Master's simplicity that could refuse so fair a proffer, made after Satan in all haste, saying in his heart, I will surely take somewhat of him, though my Master spared him ; and, pretending a message in his name to whom all power was given in heaven and in earth, hath got an interest in the chief kingdoms of the world, disposing such as he can best spare or worst manage to any potent prince that will fall down and worship him and his copartner the prince of darkness ; who of late years have almost shared the whole world betwixt them, the one ruling over infidels, the other over professed Christians. And seeing the pope (because his pomp and dignity must be maintained by worldly wealth and revenues) dares not part with the propriety of so many kingdoms at once as Satan (who only looks for honour) proffered, he hath found out a trick to supply his wants for purchasing like honour and worship by his office of keeping St. Peter's keys ; if earthly provinces or dominions fail him, God's word, his Son's blood and body, all shall be set to sale at this price, *Fall down and worship him.* For no man, we may rest assured, no nation or kingdom, whom he can hinder, shall ever taste of the Lord's cup, unless they will first acknowledge lawful authority in him to grant, deny, or dispose of it, at his pleasure ; which is an homage wherewith the Devil is more delighted than if we did acknowledge him supreme lord of all the kingdoms of the earth ; for that were as much less prejudicial to Christ's prerogative royal, as a damage in possession or goods would be to a personal disgrace, or some foul maim or deformity wrought upon a prince's body.

Propounding what possibly can be said on our Adversaries' Behalf for avoiding the Force of the former Arguments; and shewing withal the special Points that lie upon them to prove, as principally, whether their Belief of the Church's Authority can be resolved into any Divine Testimony.

1. UNTO all the difficulties hitherto proposed, I can rather wish some learned priest or Jesuit would, than hope any such ever will, directly answer point by point. For the reader's better satisfaction I will first briefly set down what possibly can be said on their behalf, and after a disclosure of their last secret refuge, draw forth thence the dead and putrefied carcass of Romish faith; which unto the ignorant and superstitious, that cannot uncover the holes and clefts wherein these impostors upon every search are wont to hide it, may yet seem to live and breathe; as the fable went of St. John the Evangelist's body, after many years' reposal in the grave; or as the blinded Jews to this day brag, the sceptre of Judah yet flourisheth beyond Babylon in Media, or some unknown part of India, whither no European is likely to resort for a disproof of his relation.

2. Unto the demonstrative evidences, as well of their error in expounding scriptures pretended for, as of other scriptures rightly alleged by us against their former or like decrees, they will be ready to oppose what Bellarmine hath done^f, That the church must judge of scriptures' evidence and private errors in expounding it, not private men of the church's expositions. Unto the objected dreadful consequences of their decrees, (could these possibly be erroneous,) they would regeest disobedience to the church; that to dis-

^f Lib. 3. c. 10.

obey it is to disobey God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, a sin as heinous as mangling of Christ's last will and testament, as idolatry. On the contrary, to obey the church even in her negative decrees and naked decisions, unguarded with any pretence of scripture, (much more where this loving mother, for the education of her children, will vouchsafe, what she need not, to allege some clause or sentence of holy writ,) we obey not the church only, but God's word also, though not in those particular places which in our judgments either contradict the former or like decrees, or else make nothing at all for them, yet in texts produced for the church's transcendent general authority. As he that adores the consecrated host in procession because his holy mother commands him so to do, or accounts want of Christ's blood no loss because denied him by her authority, although unto private spirits he may seem to contradict that law, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*^g, doth yet sincerely obey the Holy Ghost, and rightly observe the true sense and meaning of these his dictates, *Peter, I have prayed for thee that thy faith should not fail—Peter, feed my sheep—Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church*. From these places once
 400 firmly believing the church possibly cannot err, he must not question whether the practices by it enjoined contradict the former laws, both being delivered by the Holy Spirit, who cannot contradict himself. This, I take it, is the sum of all the most learned of our adversaries can or would reply unto the former difficulties.

Nor to draw faster, but rather remitting the former bonds^h, wherein they have inextricably entangled themselves by their circular progress in their resolution of faith; admit their late doctrine left any possi-

^g Deut. vi. 13, Luke iv. 8.

^h Vide lib. 2. cap. 30.

bility of knowing scriptures, acknowledged by both to be God's word, or of distinguishing human testimonies (written or unwritten) from Divine; the present question we may draw (with their free consent) unto this issue; Whether their belief of the church's infallible authority, undoubtedly established, as they pretend, in the forecited places, can be truly resolved into any branch of the first truth, or into human testimonies only. If into the latter only, the case is clear, that absolutely obeying the Romish church in the former or like decrees, which (her authority set aside) to all or most men's consciences would seem to contradict God's principal laws, we believe, and in believing obey, men more than God, human authorities, laws, or testimonies, more than Divine.

4. The strength or feebleness of Roman faith will best appear, if we try it in any one of these joints: Whether by Divine testimony it can be proved that St. Peter had such an universal, infallible, absolute authority as these men attribute unto the pope; whether by like infallible testimony it can be proved the popes from time to time, without exception, were Peter's undoubted successors, heirs apparent to all the preeminences or prerogatives he enjoyed; whether either the sovereignty or universality of their authority, (supposed probable in itself, or to themselves,) or particular injunctions derived from it, can be so fully notified to all Christians, as they need not question whether, in yielding obedience to decrees of like consequences as were the former, they do not grievously disobey God's word. For though the popes themselves might know this truth by divine revelation or otherwise, their internal assurance, unless generally communicable by divine testimonies, could be no warrant unto others for undertaking matters of fearful consequences where-

of they doubt, not only out of secret instinct or grudging of their consciences, but from an apprehension of opposition betwixt the very forms of laws papal and divine.

Peter was
not the
church,
Matt. xviii.
17.

5. First, it is improbable that he to whom our Saviour said, *If thy brother trespass against thee, dic ecclesiæ*, was the church unto which all must, from which none may appealⁱ: or if Peter, the pope, if he will be Peter's successor, must in cases of controversy appeal unto the church. How is he then, as our adversaries contend, *the church*, or such a part of it, unto whom all, even Peter himself, (were he alive,) must appeal? Must others appeal to him as judge in his
401 own cause, or he unto himself alone? Not as alone, but (so a late papist, to my remembrance, answers Gerson) as accompanied with his fellow-consul, "his chair," which is to him as Cæsar was to Julius; and so shall God's word be to both, as Bibulus was to Julius Cæsar, a mere pretence or bare name of authority, nothing else. Yet if that word avouch, that neither St. Peter's or his successors' faith could ever fail in determining controversies, we contradict it, not the pope's decisions only, if we do not in all doubtful doctrines fully rely upon them.

ⁱ Bell. lib. 2. de Pont. Rom. cap. 12. Quæ dicuntur Petro, ut uni ex fidelibus, certe omnibus fidelibus dicta intelliguntur: ut Matt. xviii. *Si peccaverit in te frater tuus*, &c. By this reason then the pope must appeal to the church: who then are meant by the church? Respondemus (saith Bellarmine) illud,

Dic ecclesiæ, significare, Defer ad publicum ecclesiæ judicium, id est, ad eos, qui publicam personam in ecclesia gerunt. Bellar. lib. 1. de Pontif. Rom. cap. 6. So that if any man offend the pope, the cause must come to be decided by himself, as a public person.

CHAP. VII.

That neither our Saviour's Prayers for the not failing of Peter's Faith, Luke xxii. 32, nor his commending his Sheep unto his feeding, John xxi. 15, prove any Supremacy in Peter over the Church, from which the Authority of the Pope can, with Probability, be derived.

1. Is it then probable our Saviour's prayers for St. Peter did collate any authority upon him, either œcumenical for extent, or sovereign for others' dependence on it; or absolutely and perpetually infallible for time, without integrity of life, or other condition; besides such cathedral consultation, as is required in the pope to support it? rather the proper effect they aimed at was an extraordinary assistance in the practice of such points as already had been, or afterwards should be, revealed unto him. Our Saviour, while he uttered them, did clearly foresee all his followers should be sifted by Satan; he that professed greatest love and resolution, more than all the rest, in such fearful sort, that without this promised supportance, his faith had utterly failed: which though afterwards it proved much stronger by this shaking, yet whether stronger than was any of his fellows' is uncertain, most unfit to be disputed: howsoever, no circumstance in that place prognosticates or abodes such extraordinary future strength, rather all suppose for the present a peculiar necessity of his Master's prayers for him, as foreseeing his tripping (to use the mildest censure) would be so dangerous, as the memorial of his recovery might be a perpetual encouragement to all backsliders against distrust of God's mercies. No man so fit to raise up such as are fallen or wallow in the filth of sin, as he that hath firmly apprehended grace from above, (or rather is so apprehended by it,) and yet can withal,

Our Saviour's prayers for St. Peter did not bestow upon him any œcumenical sovereign authority, absolutely infallible in such sense as the Romanists would make the pope's.

The admirable use of Peter's fall foreseen by the all-seeing wisdom of God.

out of a sincere and humble acknowledgment of his relapses, stoop lower than others in spiritual graces his inferiors, and as it were let himself into the pit of despair wherein sinners lie, linking their present frailty in his own forepast infirmities. It much disagrees with my temper ever to exaggerate the sins of God's saints; yea, I think the denial of Christ was less sinful in St. Peter than the like would be in many others that have received less grace, because the temptation was above measure ^kextraordinary, permitted (no doubt) to
 402 this end, that he might be a more faithful comforter of his brethren, whose faith was feeble, crazed, or decayed. He that hopes with fruit to reprehend or exhort men much daunted or ashamed at the foulness of their offences, must, as far as truth will suffer him, acknowledge himself to be a sharer in his own reproofs, to have been sometimes tainted with the original of their present grief; for so the parties grieved will be less jealous, and conceit the medicine better. Thus the royal host, in the poet, cheers up his princely guest, amated at the mention of his infamous ancestors :

*Ne perge queri, casusque priorum
 Annumerare tibi: nostro quoque sanguine multum
 Erravit pietas, nec culpa nepotibus obstat.
 Tu modo dissimilis rebus mereare secundis
 Excusare tuas.*¹——

Did parents' shame their children stain, sweet prince, thy case were mine,
 For piety sometimes her course did alter from our line:
 The blemish though did not descend:—let virtue be thy guide;
 So shall thy fame thy parents' faults, though foul and monstrous, hide.

^k Not in respect of danger represented, (which was but death,) but of extraordinary li-
 cense at that time granted to the power of darkness.

¹ Statius, lib. 1. Theb. 980.

2. By these and like circumstances may our Saviour's words—*But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: therefore, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*—be construed most appositely to his meaning. What was it, then, Peter was to strengthen in others? That which had been defective in himself. Was that his charity, his faith, or both? We read (saith Bellarmine^m) Peter's charity did fail; that his faith did fail, we never read. In vain then doth Bellarmine, in vain do all his fellows, labour to prove our Saviour should in these words ratify a perpetual indeficient purity of Roman faith: for Peter was to repair in others what had been impaired in himself; to prevent, if it were possible, the like fall in such as did, or to themselves did seem to stand; to convert, restore, and strengthen such, as in like or worse sort had denied their Redeemer. With much greater probability might the Romanists seek to establish a perpetual indeficient Christian charity in Peter's successors, had Peter's love or charity only failed. But the bad lives and manners of the Roman clergy would give too manifest evidence against them in this attempt; in this respect have these stout challengers taken upon them the defence of a never-failing faith, because not so

^m Petrus non erravit circa fidem, sed tantum aliquid ignoravit, cum audivit, *Vade Satana*; et a charitate excidit, non a fide; quando Christum negavit. Quod in tractatu de Ecclesia, suo loco docebimus. Bellar. lib. 1 de Rom. Pontif. cap. 10. fine. In those books of his, *de Ecclesia*, the reader shall find the place alleged *totidem verbis*. Bellarmine, as most of his fellows, denies that Peter was the church's founda-

tion as yet: but their readiness to defend the indeficiency of his faith in this denial, argues they must of necessity hold that the pope's faith doth never fail, albeit he usually manifested as great want of Christian charity and resolution as Peter did in that denial; or as great ignorance in divine mysteries as Peter's was, when our Saviour said unto him, *Get thee behind me, Satan*.

easily confuted. For it is a matter very hard (I must confess) to prove, that faith can never fail, which may deny Christ so formally and constantly as Peter's did, without defect. The best is, that by their own confession this place can prove the acts or exercises of Roman faith to be no better than St. Peter's was in this denial of Christ. His offence, they grant, was foul, but his faith without defect. So may popes be monstrously luxurious in their lives, but always infallible in their doctrine. Reader, consult with thine own heart, and give sentence (as in the sight of God) of the whole frame of their religion, by the foundation; and of the foundation (such as they willingly acknowledge faith to be of all true religion, and every Christian virtue) by Bellarmine's testimony. If Peter became (as they pretend) the fundamental rock, by confessing, that religion doubtless, which hath no better ground of infallibility than Peter's faith not secured from a threefold denial of Christ, was first planted by the spirit of error and of Antichrist.

3. Not to dispute any longer what it was, but who they were St. Peter was to strengthen—all without exception? This justly may seem impossible, seeing the exercise of his ministry could not extend to all nations, much less unto all ages. Yet these words bequeath no hereditary royal jurisdiction over all persons, but rather enjoin personal acts of penitency unto St. Peter for his former personal offence. He had found extraordinary mercy at his Lord and Master's hands; and was to communicate the like unto his fellow-servants more guilty of his offence. Christ, after his faith had failed, did convert and strengthen him against the like temptation; and he, converted, was commanded to convert and strengthen others. Whom? Not such as by

conversion might become his brethren, or rather his children in Christ ; but rather such as were hewn out of the same rock, and could truly call Abraham their father, Sarah their mother, joint-professors with him of Moses' law and the prophets, more than his brethren and associates in denying him of whom Moses and all the prophets bare testimony.

4. To subtract all matter of calumination from men, too much disposed to cavil without any probable cause or just occasion : notwithstanding his threefold denial of Christ, I deny not a triple or quadruple prerogative in Peter in respect of Christ's other apostles ; yet consisting, not in any authority more infallible in itself, or more sovereign for superiority, over such as were to depend upon him as a chief messenger of the Lord of hosts, but in an extraordinary efficacy of his ordinary apostleship. In what respect then was his ordinary ministry or apostleship so extraordinarily powerful ? in respect of the universal church throughout all ages, or of the Jewish synagogue for the time being only ? St. Paul confutes the former as evidently as he plainly avoucheth the latter, *When they saw the gospel over the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel over the circumcision was unto Peter ; (for he that was mighty by Peter in the apostleship over the circumcision was also mighty by me towards the Gentiles ;) James and Cephas and John, which were counted to be pillars, knew of the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and to Barnabas the right hands of fellowship ; that we should preach unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision*ⁿ.

5. Here the less in speech I amplify, the more in heart and mind I tacitly admire the unspeakable power ^{St. Peter's extraordinary power}

ⁿ Gal. ii. 7—9.

and efficacy
in convert-
ing the cir-
cumcision.

and wisdom of our God, that by the extraordinary offences or infirmities of one or two, can firmly establish the faith of all his saints. Albeit he used the ministry of every other apostle, in reconciling the world unto himself; yet Paul and Peter were as the two principal intermediate elements, proportioned and qualified of purpose for the more apt connecting this mixed inferior globe with the heavenly sphere, the sons of men with the Son of God; the one by symbolizing with the Jew, the other with the Gentile in his sin, both with Christ in true wisdom, in all good gifts and graces of the Spirit. St. Paul's offences against *God manifested in the flesh* have the same proportion to St. Peter's, that the ignorance, infidelity, or idolatry of the Gentiles had with the Jews' delinquency, or apostasy from the God of their fathers. St. Paul had not known our Saviour in the flesh, ignorant of his wisdom in teaching or power in working, and in his ignorant zeal unto Moses and the Law, did persecute his followers and disciples after his resurrection; hereby made a fitter symbol for reconciling the Gentiles unto God, whom they had not known, usually misled in a blind devotion to their dumb idols and traditions of their elders, to hate and persecute the Jews, the only professors of true religion, the only servants till that time of the everliving God. St. Peter had long conversed with our Saviour, heard him teach as never man taught, seen him do what no man else could ever do; his eyes had beheld the brightness of his excellent glory, and, out of his apprehension of his Deity, he had professed more than ordinary love, *Lord, I am ready to go with thee into the prison, and to death*^o; yet when he comes unto his trial, flatly denies that ever he knew him: hereby more fitly qualified for recover-

^o Luke xxii. 33.

ing the backsliding apostatical Jews, who had known the Lord, and all the wonders which he had wrought for Israel : they had professed such love and loyalty to him, as no people could do more unto their gods ; posterity still retaining the protestations of their religious fathers—*All this is come upon us, yet do we not forget thee, neither deal we falsely concerning thy covenant. Our hearts are not turned back, neither our steps gone out of thy paths. Surely for thy sake are we slain continually, and are counted as sheep for the slaughter*—yet when he came in the similitude of man to exact obedience and allegiance at their hands, they will not know him ; but, as Samuel had foretold, cast him off from reigning over them, and openly protest against him, *We have no king but Cæsar.*

6. Answerable to this observation is the success of their apostleship registered by the Evangelist. We never read so many Jews at once so thoroughly converted by our Saviour, or so seriously affected with his doctrine in his lifetime, as with that memorable sermon of St. Peter^p. The manner of his reiterated appellations, *Ye men of Judæa, and ye all that inhabit Jerusalem—Ye men of Israel—Men and brethren*^q ; of mentioning God's promises made to them and to their children ; of his reply ; his earnest beseeching and exhorting them that had appealed jointly to him and the other apostles, argue these were the brethren he in particular was enjoined to convert, confirm, and strengthen. And like a skilful surgeon, that knew by his own recovery how to prick their consciences, without giving them a deadly wound, he presseth them in the last place with crucifying the Lord of glory. The mention whereof had been enough in others' judgment

^p Acts ii. 14. unto the end of the chapter. Acts iii. 12. to the 13th verse of the fourth chapter.

^q Acts ii. 29. iii. 25.

to have moved them to despair: but this comforter knew by experience, that to be thoroughly touched in heart, as he had been, for such foul offences past, was
 405 the readiest way to that true repentance, which he found, and such repentance the surest holdfast of lively faith. But he that was thus powerful in the circumcision became a stone of offence unto the Gentiles, with whom he had to deal at Antioch. For by his tripping in an uncouth way, (as being out of his natural element,) he made them stumble, justly reprov'd, for his amphibious conversation with men of tempers so contrary, by St. Paul; under whose hand the edification of the Gentiles did better prosper. Yet he nothing so powerful in converting the Jews, though his zeal towards them was no less than St. Peter's was; his endeavours to sow the seed of life in their hearts as great, but with small hope of seeing any fruit of his labours. But it will be worth the reader's pains, I am persuaded, to observe, that albeit he press the Jews at Antioch with the very same arguments, (but more forcibly and artificially framed,) wherewith St. Peter had converted so many, yet is enforced to make a contrary conclusion. Peter concludes in hope prognosticating success—*Amend your lives, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is made unto you and to your children*^r. *And the same day were added to the church about three thousand souls.* St. Paul, for conclusion, takes his farewell of them, as no part of his peculiar charge; only tells them, it was his and his fellow Barnabas' duty to admonish them^s. *Then Paul and Barnabas spake boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you:*

St. Paul's extraordinary power and efficacy in winning the Gentiles unto Christ.

^r Acts ii. 38. ^s See the like success of his preaching, Acts iv. 4.

but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have made thee a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be the salvation unto the end of the world. And when the Gentiles heard it, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. Thus the word of the Lord was published throughout the whole country. But the Jews stirred certain devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. Acts xiii. 46—50.

7. Thus it is as true of grace's as nature's ordination, εἰς πρὸς εἷν; the power and efficacy of Christ's chief apostles is restrained unto their proper and limited sphere, God always blessing those endeavours best, that are employed within the precincts of that peculiar charge whereto he appoints us. By that which hath been said it may appear, that St. Peter's and St. Paul's prerogatives, how great soever, were both personal, to expire with themselves; although a title of supremacy over the Gentiles might be pretended with much greater probability from St. Paul than from St. Peter, whose peculiar charge was the Jew; as may be yet further manifested by the place most urged for his and his successors' œcumenical jurisdiction, bequeathed, as the Romanists suppose, in these words—*Peter, feed my lambs—Peter, feed my sheep.*

8. But the natural circumstances of that place, compared with the late exposition of the former, deads all their blows thence intended against us, ere they can rightly frame themselves to fetch them. A little before these words were uttered, Peter, desirous to approve his excessive love to our Saviour, and manifest

Who were the sheep Peter was principally appointed to feed, and what authority he had over them.

more than an ordinary desire of his company, (that had appeared unknown unto him, but from John's notification,) *girt his coat about him, and cast himself into the sea, whiles the other disciples (not above two hundred cubits from land) came by ship to meet him.* After a short dinner, passed, as the text seems to insinuate, in silence^t, at least not entertained with such variety of discourse, as might either interrupt some private intimation made to Peter of future conference, or put the former occasion of this following exhortation out of the other apostles' memory, our Saviour enjoins *Simon the son of Jona to feed his lambs*, and again and again, to *feed his sheep*. He sees him then, like a loving soldier, desirous (by his adventurous approach unto him) to recover his former reputation, much impaired by denying him. Whether our Saviour check or cherish this desire, I question not, much less determine. His speeches, with the former circumstances, import thus much: "Thou hast made profession of more than ordinary love unto me, of readiness to lay down thy life for my sake, though all others, even these thy fellows, should forsake me; willing I see thee, by thy present hazard of it, to make thy former words good. But wouldst thou have me yet to shew thee a more excellent way? I have told thee it long since, Thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Simon the son of Jona, if thou desire to prove thyself a Cephas, or testify the sincerity of thy faith and love, which by the powers of darkness were of late so grievously shaken, *feed my lambs, feed my sheep*. Yea, seeing thou thrice deniedst the Shepherd of thy soul, I say unto thee the third time, *Feed my*

^t *Jesus said unto them, Come thou? seeing they knew he was and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art the Lord.* John xxi. 12.

sheep. Let the memory of thy forepast threefold sin, also let this my present threefold admonition, excite thee unto triple diligence in thy charge; to shew such pity and compassion as I have shewed to thee, unto that lost and scattered flock, which have denied me, or consented to my crucifying. Let thy faithful performance of what I request thee at my farewell be the first testimony of thy love to me, to be lastly testified by the loss of thy life, which thou didst promise me when I gave mine for my sheep, but shalt not pay until thou hast fulfilled this my request: *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not*^u." John xxi. 18.

9. But here Bellarmine, always exceeding witty, either to elude scriptures whose natural meaning is evidently against him, or to collect a gulling sense from such as nothing at all make for him, would infer that the possessive *my*^x necessarily refers Peter's charge or jurisdiction unto all the flock that called Christ their Lord *owner*. For seeing after his resurrection there was but one fold, for this great Shepherd to say *my sheep*, could not distinguish one sort from another, and therefore none to be exempted from Pe-

^u Thus much it seems Peter did prophesy unaware, John xiii. 37, but failed in application of the time. So our Saviour saith, *Thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterward*; as well in death, as in life after death.

^x Deinde aliam rationem, eamque insignem nobis suppeditat pronomen illud, *meas*. Nam cum absque ulla restrictione addatur

ad nomen, *oves*, pronomen, *meas*, manifeste significatur, eas omnes oves Petro commendari, ad quas extenditur pronomen, *meas*; certum est autem illud, *meas*, extendi ad omnes simpliciter. Nec enim ullus est in ecclesia, qui se Christi ovem esse non gloriatur: igitur omnes omnino Christianos nullo excepto Petro Dominus commendavit.—Bellar. de Rom. Pont. lib. i. cap. 16.

ter's oversight. But the flock, though one in respect of the Owner, which had purchased all with one price, did consist of sheep much different in breeding, and retaining their several marks ; some were of the circumcision, others of the uncircumcision ; the former had been our Saviour's peculiar charge in his lifetime, 407 (for *he was not sent but unto the lost sheep of Israel*,) these he might with note of distinction call *my sheep*. As if a shepherd, raised to better fortunes, should purchase a great many more sheep than he was wont to look to himself, and refer both sorts to several keepers, though both to fold together in the evening, he might *signanter* say to the one, Look well to my sheep, though both flocks were his by right of possession, but only the one his by a peculiar relation of former charge or oversight. And thus, as we have said before, the Jews were committed peculiarly to St. Peter's care. Albeit, consonantly to the former exposition of both places alleged, our Saviour by *my sheep* might only intimate his tender care over his flock without distinction ; that Peter might more carefully feed as many as he could personally look to, seeing the proof of his love to his Lord and Master, and of his fidelity which had failed, did consist herein. As for Bellarmine's other collections^y, that our Saviour, by mentioning his *sheep*, should mean prelates or superiors ; by his *little sheep*, (so their Vulgar distinguisheth,) inferior pastors ; by his *lambs*, mere laics, such as have fathers, but no children in Christ : they only prove that in this light of the gospel there is a generation of men professing Christianity, yet as apt as grossly to transform Christ's spiritual love, as the heathen did his Father's glory, into the similitude of their carnal corrupt affections.

y Vide Bellar. de Rom. Pont. lib. i. cap. 16.

10. If it may stand with Christian sobriety so precisely to determine of particular differences implied in these words, it is most likely our Saviour meant to include all sorts of people, according to the different care their diverse estates required : some were to be tenderly handled, and cherished like lambs ; others to be looked unto like elder sheep, and to be fed with stronger meat, but with less personal or assiduous attendance. There is no one kind of argument persuades me more the Romish church is led by the spirit of error, than whiles I observe how they still approve themselves to be Peter's successors in denying Christ, and going the wrong way unto the truth of the gospel ; always, like ungracious children, seeking to enter upon the inheritance bequeathed, without performance of what the testator principally required. Our Saviour requested Peter in these terms, *Feed my sheep*, (not *thine* ;) intimating, he should approve himself a faithful shepherd, one that was to give strict account unto the Owner of whatsoever befell the flock : these men, by commission pretended from St. Peter, would make themselves great sheep-masters, to kill and eat at their pleasures. That to *feed* is all one as to *rule* and *govern*, as they would have it, is a conceit of men only minding their bellies, or seeking to be fed by others' spoils. That feeding or pastorship is always accompanied with rule and authority, none that ever tasted any spiritual food will deny. That Peter was a pastor and a feeder, an extraordinary pastor, a principal feeder, and therefore of preeminent rule and authority over his flock, we acknowledge ; but no preeminence in him above his fellows, which was not grounded upon his eminent care, and more than ordinary fidelity in feeding it ; not with lordly injunctions sealed with anathemas, but with sincerity of life and soundness of doctrine. There

408 was no difference betwixt the tenure of his and others' estates, as if he had been lord by inheritance, not obnoxious to any forfeiture by misdemeanour, and others but leaseholders (during term of good life and manners) of the privileges they enjoyed, to return by escheat, or for want of succession, unto Peter's successors. That penitential exercise of feeding Christ's sheep, in such strict terms so often enjoined, rather argues, that should have been interpreted unfaithfulness or disloyalty in him, which would have been accounted only neglect or want of diligence in others. And the ingenious reader may, if it please him, easily observe, that of all apostolical writings now extant, none have either less intimation of any preeminency or supremacy, or more lively characters of their author's unfeigned humility and lowly submission of himself unto the meanest of his fellow-ministers, than St. Peter's; as if by them he would have testified his perpetual mindfulness of that former offence, and strict charge of fidelity in feeding Christ's flock thereupon enjoined. *The elders* (saith he) *which are among you, I beseech, which am—* what? the chief apostle, an ecclesiastic monarch, Christ's vicar-general, an elder of elders? no: but—*also an elder, συμπρεσβύτερος, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which dependeth upon you, caring for it, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; not as though ye were lords over God's heritage, but that ye may be examples to the flock*^z. Yet for any to arrogate such infallibility, or challenge such authority, as he had, without perseverance in the like fidelity and sincerity as Peter (requested upon the strictest terms of love unto his Lord and Master, in all likelihood

^z 1 Pet. v. 1—3.

would and) did use in feeding his flock, is such a mock of Christ and this his blessed saint, as none but the brood of Antichrist could ever have hatched. Yet inferior to that which accompanies the third pretended ground of Romish faith, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc Petram, Thou art Peter, and upon this Peter* (as they would have it) *will I build my church.*

CHAP. VIII.

409

That Christ, not St. Peter, is the Rock spoken of, Matt. xvi. 18; that the Jesuits' Exposition of that place demonstrateth the Pope to be the great Antichrist.

1. WHY the Latin interpreter following the Greek should vary the gender, reading *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram*; not *Tu es Petra, et super hanc petram*: although the tongue wherein they suppose St. Matthew wrote had but one and the same word, *cepha*, Bellarmine and Maldonate^a give these two reasons: first, seeing St. Peter was a man, his name was to be expressed in the Greek and Latin by a word of the masculine gender. Secondly, albeit the Greek masculine *Πέτρος* be sometimes used for a rock; yet very seldom, or in the Attic dialect only, if at all, when it is taken for a fundamental rock fit to erect edifices upon. Thus professed commentators oftentimes find out many witty reasons of like alterations in words, which the authors

^a Dubitabit aliquis, cur, si non Matthæus, Matthæi tamen Græcus interpres, illam nominum et generis distinctionem adhibuerit. Respondeo in promptu rationem esse, quia, quamvis Græci, *Petra*, et *πέτρος* genere masculino et *πέτρα* fœminino dicatur, tamen Petrus, quia vir erat, non Petra, fœminino, sed Petrus masculino nomine vocandus erat. Secundo

autem loco, ubi de ædificii fundamento agebatur, non Petrum sed Petram dixit, quamvis idem utrumque nomen significaret, quia in ejusmodi edificiis nomen Petra, fœmininum magis est usitatum *πέτρος* enim et Atticum et rarum est.—Maldonat. in 16. Matthæi. [v. 18.] Vide Bellar. de Rom. Pont. lib. 1. cap. 10.

never dreamed of. But granting (what these two learned Romanists only suppose, none can prove) St. Matthew had written in the Syriac tongue: neither of the two reasons alleged for the Greek or Latin interpreters' variation of the gender can have any place in St. John^b, who wrote in Greek, but not in the Attic dialect, (and yet purposely instructing us what the Syriac word *cepha*, which our Saviour gave as a surname to S. Peter at his first calling, meant,) saith, it is by interpretation Πέτρος *Petrus*, not *Petra*; though this feminine might have been used without offence in the interpretation of his name, so he had not been usually called thereby, or being so usually called, it might have grown into a masculine; for why should *Petra* seem a more effeminate name in St. Peter, than *Zabarrella*, or *Carafa* in their cardinals, or *Aquaviva* in the general of the Jesuits? If Jesus himself had given the governor of the society, instyled by his own name, this surname in the abstract, *Aquaviva*, what would men think it did portend? that he should be *that well of water, which springeth into everlasting life*? or rather that he had been so denominate from some relation to such water, that *Claudius Aquaviva* was as much as *Claudius de Aquaviva*? It is most likely then that as well St. John when he interprets *Cepha* Πέτρος, as the Greek translator of St. Matthew, in saying, *Tu es Petrus*, not *Petra*, did seek to prevent that sinister sense, which posterity might cull out of the ambiguous Syriac, *cepha* sometimes signifying the rock itself, otherwhiles implying no more than a denomination from it. Nor was it St. Austin's ignorance of the Hebrew and Syriac, as Bellarmine objects^c, but rather his per-

What the name of *Cephas* doth import in St. Peter.

^b John i. 42.

^c Existimavit Augustinus, Petram, super quam ædificatur ec-

clesia, non esse Petrum; quia credidit, Cephā non significare Petram, sed aliquid a *Petra* de-

fect knowledge of Christ, as *the only rock of salvation*, which made him think that Πέτρος in Greek should imply no more than πέτρινος, one belonging to that sure foundation whereon the church is built. Would 410 God Bellarmine could plead ignorance in these tongues for his excuse; even he that hath no acquaintance with the Syriac but by the affinity of it with the Hebrew, or with neither, but from the common analogy betwixt them and modern tongues destitute of such variety of formations or cases, as are facile and plentiful in the Greek and Latin, cannot be ignorant that abstracts or substantives, whilst given as names to men, are usually equivalent to the concrete or adjective, whereby they are oftentimes expressed in Latin, as in our English we attribute the substantive or abstract name of countries unto earls, or of towns unto barons; whom our sovereign lord when he speaks in Latin, would call *Essexius*, in English he calls *Essex*: so *Roger Mortimer* with us, is *Rogerus de mari mortuo* with Latin writers. Even in the Latin itself, wherein the distinction between abstracts and concretes, or substantives and adjectives, is obvious and apparent, the fundamental abstract or substantive is given oftentimes by way of cognomination, to express some relation between it and the party denominated from it, in value no more than the adjective or denomination in the oblique case; so Scipio taken properly, or in its direct and primary signification, is a walking staff, *baculum*; but attributed to Cornelius^d, (the first of that honourable family call-

ativum; ut si diceremus, Petrinum, aut Petreium, quomodo Christianus non significat Christum, sed aliquid a Christo derivatum. Quia igitur ecclesia super Petram, non super aliquem Petrinum vel Petreium, ædifi-

canda est, ideo existimavit Augustinus, per illam Petram intelligi non Petrum, sed Christum—De Rom. Pont. lib. 1. cap. 10.

^d Non aliter dicti Scipiones, nisi quod Cornelius, qui patrem luminibus carentem pro baculo

ed Scipiones,) implies no more than one that had been *instar Baculi*, or *Scipionis*, instead of a rod or walking staff to his blind decrepit father; so Scrophæ^e (though attributed in the abstract unto another family in Rome) imports not that their ancestors had been swine, or their mother a sow, but only some particular relation to that creature. The like we may say of Asina and Bestia^f, names of other Roman families. And if I mistake not, that famous professor which hight Victoria in the abstract, was but *Franciscus a victoria, de victoria*, or *victorius*. In like sort, although it were true that Cepha in the Syriac did only signify a rock or fundamental stone; yet seeing all grant that Christ was truly and principally such, the same name given unto Simon the son of Jona must imply no more than a denominative reference unto the rock; so as if he had been called in Latin, *Simon Petra*, or in English, *Simon Rock*, this could imply no more than *Simon de petra* or *petreus*, *Simon a rock*, or *of the rock*.

Why Peter
was called
Cephas.

2. But whatsoever the Syriac *Cephas* or the Greek Πέτρος in the place cited do import, it will be demanded, why our Saviour bestowed this name on Simon the son of Jona, at his first coming to him? The particular references betwixt him and the rock itself, or chief stone, might be so many as might convince him of curiosity, perhaps of folly, that would peremptorily or precisely determine what one should give occasion to this denomination: most probable it is, that he who *knew what was in man*, did at the first sight of

regebat, Scipio cognominatus, nomen ex cognomine posteris dedit.—Macrob. Satur. lib. 1. cap. 6.

^e Vide Macrobius loc. cit.

^f Asinæ cognomentum Corneliis datum est, quoniam prin-

ceps Corneliæ gentis empto fundo, seu filia data marito cum sponsores ab eo sollemniter poscerentur, asinam cum pecuniæ onere produxit in forum, quasi pro sponsores præsens pignus.—Macrob. Saturn. l. 1. cap. 6.

Simon see in him, or mean to bestow upon him, some extraordinary aptness to apprehend the words of eternal life, or to descry the *gate of the Lord whereby the righteous were to enter*, or, (which is equivalent,) 411 Christ to be the *chief corner-stone* spoken of by the Psalmist: herein I willingly assent to Bellarmine, that St. Peter was the first that distinctly did apprehend, or at least, by confession, open the great mystery of Christianity and foundation of true religion, God *incarnate in our flesh*. Thus much the circumstances of that place seem to infer; *For Jesus when he came unto the coasts of Cæsarea, he asked his disciples, Whom do men say that I* (commonly known by the name of *the Son of man*) *am? And they said, Some say, John Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah*^g; all to this effect, that he was some *one of the Prophets*, (or as Nathaniel in his confession meant^h,) such a son of God as they had been. These were in the way, but came not near the main foundation which Peter first uncovers; for when our Saviour demands, *But whom say ye* (whom I must appoint as chief builders, and principal parts of that spiritual temple which is toward) *that I am? Then Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*. And from his first discovery of this rock, or chief corner-stone, he might well be denominated a rock or stone, as Maximus was named Messala from a town in Sicily so called, which he had taken, or, as we might denominate some famous mariner, from some notable place which he should first discover. To this effect doth our Saviour reply unto St. Peter, *Blessed art thou, Simon the son of Jona, for not flesh and blood, not the chief builders amongst the people, but he that laid this precious stone in Sion, hath uncovered the same to thee*. And seeing thou

^g Matt. xvi. 13, &c.^h John i. 49.

hast said what should be said and thought of me, I only say of thee, Thou hadst not thy name for nought, rightly wast thou called a rock or stone, that hast so plainly opened the way unto that very rock whereon I mean to *build my church*. Had our Saviour meant Peter had been *that rock*, or were his words to be interpreted, as in effect the papists do, he had said, Σὺ εἶ ὁ Πέτρος, *Tu es Petra illa super quam*, &c. But seeing he adds no emphasis to Peter's name, but unto *petra*, these words, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ, are but an actual expression, or more definite specification of what had been potentially included in the indeterminate transitive ἀπεκάλυψε, *revelavit*; for where our English reads *flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee*, the original is verbatim, *hath not revealed to thee*, to wit, that *rock whereupon I will build my church*. The direct current then of our Saviour's speech is thus; Blessed art thou, Simon the son of Jonah, for not flesh and blood, but my Father which is in heaven, hath revealed that rock to thee whereupon I will build my church, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, whereof thou (according to the omen of thy name long since given by me) shalt be the first living stone, by whom all others shall be squared, ere admitted into this spiritual edifice.

3. That our Saviour did not expressly mention any other rock or stone before he said to Simon, *Thou art Peter*, doth nothing prejudice this exposition. It sufficed that God and the rock of salvationⁱ, Messiah,

ⁱ Pronomen *hanc* non potest referri ad Christum, petram, sed ad Petrum, petram; debet enim referri ad aliquod proximum, non ad remotum. Proxime ante dictum fuerat non Christo sed Petro, *Tu es Cephas*, id est, *petra*. Deinde licet Christus dici possit.

petra, tamen hoc in loco non est vocatus *petra* a Petro confitente, sed Christus filius Dei vivi; debet autem referri illud, *hanc*, ad eum qui nominatus est *petra*, non ad eum, qui non est appellatus hoc nomine.—Bellar. lib. 1. de Rom. Pont. cap. 10. Vide

the chief corner stone, the Christ, were then known⁴¹² and yet are held as equivalent even amongst the learned papists; that the disciples to whom he then spake did no less perfectly know, more ready to acknowledge, as much as our adversaries yet do, that not Peter, but his and their Master only, was to be the *chief corner stone* in that temple they had often heard he should, and now he tells them he was to build. The present dialogue would abundantly instruct them, that not the Son of man himself, howsoever considered, but in such sort as his heavenly Father had revealed him to St. Peter, truly apprehended as God and man, was a foundation competent for so incomparable a structure. Such as before his time had gone the farthest, such as thought he had been Moses, (who had no peer among the prophets, greater than whom it was scarce expected any son of mortal man should be,) had not come unto ground firm enough to build their own and all men's faith upon. To them the gate of the Lord, by which the righteous were to enter, was not fully opened; they came not to a distinct, direct, and perfect view of this *chief corner stone*: for this reason they could not be accounted *πέτροι*, stones actually wrought, and so well fitting this precious foundation, as that others might be framed by their pattern, and then jointly fastened to it. This was Peter's prerogative, unto whom the keys are first given, (as unto the first of all the faithful that had passed this gate,) and power

Deut. xxxii. Psal. xviii. et xix. ult. Tu vero considera verborum prophetæ amplitudinem, poterat dicere, Mittam vobis Messiam, sed voluit tam insigne beneficium verbis insignibus, et metaphoricis explicare. Est autem trans-

latio sumpta ab ædificantibus, quæ verborum amplitudine innuit rei magnificentiam et majestatem.—Pintus in Isa. xxviii. 16. See other annotations out of Bellarmine in this chapter. See Maldonate on Matt. xxi. 42.

by them to admit as many as were, to exclude all that were not, fashionable to this rock and corner stone.

4. Seeing then neither the apostles then thought, nor can any man yet conceive, that Peter could be an extraordinary stone, or second foundation in the edifice there spoken of, but must withal admit Christ to be *the chief corner stone*, or surest fundamental rock; I would appeal to my adversary in his sober mood, to any not actually drunken with the Babylonish cup, unto whether foundation, unto what stone, the principal or less principal, these words (*and upon this rock will I build my church*) must be referred? We must judge of the foundation by the edifice, and of the edifice by the attribute. Now, as there is no one title wherein the Spirit doth more delight to express the strength and praises of the living God, than this of rock; so was there never any more puissant effect attributed to any rock than the eternal stability of this edifice. What St. Paul saith of the foundation, I may truly say of the edifice and the attribute. Another edifice more strong than this church can no man build; no attribute can be imagined more glorious than this; *that the gates of hell shall never prevail*, or (as Maldonate^k more fully expresseth the majesty of the Hebraism) *shall not be able to stand against it*, or confront it. To ascribe the supportance of such a struc-

^k Omnes quos legi præter Hilarium existimant sensum esse; Fore, ut Diaboli potentia ecclesiam quidem exerceat, nunquam vero opprimat. Quæ sententia parva est, nec verba Christi implet, nec enim solent portæ vincere sed resistere, itaque non potuit offendendi vis sed defendendi portas significari. Sensus igitur, nisi fallor, est, Fore, ut ec-

clesia super Petram a Christo fundata, omnem Diaboli potentiam expugnet; ita ut nulla arte, nullis viribus possit resistere. Hoc enim multo majus est, et verbis magis consentaneum. Portas enim inferi non prævalituras adversus ecclesiam, phrasis Hebraica est לא יכלו לה לא non poterunt adversus illam, id est, non poterunt illi resistere.

ture to the strength of Peter's faith, not as it was in him only, but as it is perpetually propagated to his successors, is to impeach him of disloyalty, and rob Christ of his greatest glory. For even such as plead for this prerogative in Peter's successors confess, that ⁴¹³ this they give to Peter is our Saviour's most usual style¹; we may with the prophet demand, *Who is the rock besides our God*^m? *The Lord is the rock of our salvation*ⁿ, (of such salvation as the gates of hell cannot oppugn;) the same He is *the Lord, our rock, and our redeemer*, Psalm xix. 14.

5. The former interpretation will yet further approve itself to be most consonant to the general analogy of faith, most native to the place before alleged, and in respect of Romish glosses, such as is the church of Christ unto the gates of hell, or the ark of old unto Dagon; if we observe (what is most frequently and perspicuously taught in other scriptures pertinent to the main point in controversy) first, that the immediate subject of Peter's confession (God incarnate, or *dwelling* (as St. Paul speaks) *bodily in Christ*) is presupposed by all sacred writers as the great mystery of man's redemption, the fundamental rock of salvation. Secondly, that all, and only they, which in sincerity of heart conceive, and with steadfast perseverance retain, this confession which Peter made, are true and lively parts of that edifice which *the Son of the living God* here promised to erect.

6. The reader, I know, in this fruitful age of learned expositors may find variety of comments, but none that can more fully satisfy him than St. Peter's own paraphrase upon our Saviour's promise to him, if we

¹ Vide Maldonatum in versum
18. cap. xvi. Matt. et Bellar.
lib. 1. de Pont. Rom. cap. 19.

^m Psalmi xviii. 31.

ⁿ Psalm xlvi.

compare it with other scriptures in sense and meaning equivalent : that Christ was the only rock whereupon this saint himself, as a living member of the church, was built, is apparent ; because, intending to make his flock lively parts of the same edifice, he tells them they come not to himself, as to a second rock, but *unto the Lord, as unto a living stone, disallowed of men, yet chosen of God and precious* : as if he had said, Not flesh and blood, not the wisest of men, but only our heavenly Father did first reveal him unto me for such ; and in the words following (as if he had purposely intended to certify us that the name of Peter did descend to him from this affinity with this *elect and precious stone*, not because he was a rock or fundamental stone himself) he adds, *And ye, as lively stones, be made a spiritual house, a lively priesthood*, (priests as living, and altars as stones,) *to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. Though they were not all to have the title or name of Peters, (for so there could be no distinction,) yet so they would believe and confess as he did, that Christ was *the living stone*, they were to have the reality or substance, to be stones of that spiritual house, against which the gates of hell should not be able to prevail.

7. And seeing he now endeavoured to fasten them unto Christ, as unto the only sure rock of their redemption, it could not be so available to tell them in our Saviour's own words, that becoming such a spiritual house, and continuing in offering up sacrifices acceptable unto God, *the gates of hell should not prevail against them*. Until this day-star had more fully shined in their hearts, he knew it for the better method to kindle the same hope in them by the prophets' light, which in time would break forth clearer of itself ; for that glorious promise of our Saviour differed

from the prophetical prediction which St. Peter gives them for their assurance, but as the light which goes 414 before doth from the brightness following the sun's rising; what Christ had told him was in effect contained before in that scripture^o, *Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect and precious, and he that believeth therein shall not be ashamed*^p. Why not ashamed? Because his hope should be most sure, and *hope* (as the apostle saith) *maketh not ashamed*: he meant, It supporteth against all shame or terror, the world, flesh, or Devil can oppose against us. They may threaten, but not so deject us, as to cause us, either through fear of disgrace or other danger, skulk or run from men's presence, as a learned Hebrician expresseth the Hebrew word, rendered by the vulgar *non festinabit*, he shall not *hasten*; or to express the full value of both these apostles' speeches by the last and most potent object of shame, Believing in Christ we shall not be found naked in that last day, nor wish the mountains for a covering to our shame; but enabled by sure hope to stand before the Son of man; for, not ashamed of him before men in this life, he will not be ashamed of us in that day. Then shall that victory of this spiritual house over the impotent assaults of hell gates be manifested. Thus by St. Peter's own exposi-

^o Isa. xxviii. 16. Vide Fore-rum in hunc locum.

^p The word in the original signifieth to *make haste*, and therefore any kind of haste, according to the difference of the matter or object; in this place equivalent to the Latin *proripiat*, a word signifying haste, but haste caused by shame or fear of men's presence from which the party ashamed seeks with confused

speed to hide himself.

Et cum clamarem quo nunc se proripit ille?
Tityre coge pecus, tu post carecta latebas.

This is true of faith, which the apostle saith of love, 1 John iv. 17. *Herein is love perfect in us, that we should have boldness in the day of judgment: for as he is, even so are we in this world.* Vid. Luc. xxi. 25, 26. of the confused state of the wicked.

tion, *the Son of the living God*, whom he confessed, was that living *stone*, from whose strength this spiritual house, whereof he and his flock were *באפא חיתא*, *lively stones*, becomes so strong. To make either St. Peter or his successors joint, though secondary, supporters of this glorious work, were to divide our faith betwixt Christ and them; for it only stands by faith and confidence immediately fastened upon the foundation or supporters. If then we may not so fasten our faith either upon Peter or his successors, we can receive no other strength from them than we do from Christ's other apostles, and that is only from their ministerial function, in squaring and fastening us unto this *living stone*. To this purpose saith St. Paul, *Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*. Whosoever was himself builded on him, albeit he never heard of St. Peter, albeit the doctrines he heaped upon this foundation were but hay and stubble, or matter alike apt to take fire; yet the flame wherein these idle speculations of his brain were to perish should but singe his clothes, not devour his substance; because by faith united unto that *living stone*, which without any other intermediate sence or fence doth quench the flames of hell, and keep them from scorching any, even the last and uppermost that shall be built upon him, unto the world's end. For the same apostle's rule is universal both in respect of time and persons: *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved*⁹.

8. But did St. Paul by special revelation utter this, as a mystery altogether unknown before unto the faithful? Rather by participation of the same Spirit

⁹ Rom. x. 9.

which spake in the prophet, he only unfolds the oracle late expounded, I must confess without distinct apprehension of so good warrant then, as is now suggested; for the apostle, to prove his former assertion, urgeth that place of the prophet, *Whosoever believes in him shall not be ashamed*^r; so then with St. Paul it is all one *to believe in Christ raised from the dead, or in the corner stone, rejected of men, allowed of God*. And it seems the declaration made unto St. Peter, that Christ whom he confessed (howsoever a rock to fall upon to both the houses of Israel) was the sure foundation of the faithful, which the prophet foretold⁴¹⁵ should be laid in Zion, made his ignorance (to say no worse) in dissuading his Master from suffering such disgrace and ignominy of the elders, high priests, and scribes, more inexcusable, because it had been so plainly foretold, that the *corner stone* was to be basely esteemed of them, ere advanced of God. Hence our Saviour reproves him so sharply: *Then he turned back, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: because thou understandest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men*^s. As if he had said, Shall this rock become a stumblingstone unto thee also, unto whom it was first revealed? what I now told thee, the prophet long since foretold; *It was the Lord's doing, and should have been marvellous* (not offensive) *in thy sight*^t. Hast thou never read how the builders must first refuse that stone which the Lord will afterwards appoint *chief in the corners*? From remembrance of this check, St. Peter, it may be, whiles he paraphrased upon this place, used not the Psalmist's but our Saviour's words; *Ye come* (saith he) *as unto a living stone, disallowed* not by the builders, but *of men*,

^r Rom. x. 11.^s Matt. xvi. 23.^t Psalm cxviii. 23.

chosen not of the Lord, but *of God*, howsoever elsewhere he more fully parallels these two, (as St. Paul had done,) Christ crucified and raised again; the stone cast aside, and constituted as head of the corner. *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye have crucified, whom God raised again from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone cast aside of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for among men there is given none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved*^u. Then is there no other, whose name imported as much as a rock or stone, to support men against all commotions the powers of hell could raise against them.

9. So our Saviour takes the husbandmen killing of the lord of the vineyard's son^x, and the builders' rejecting the *head stone of the corner*, as equivalent; first he demands, *When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen*^y (that had slain his son)? They reply, *He will cruelly destroy these wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall deliver him the fruits in their seasons*^z. And this judgment they had given against themselves he ratifies by the like express sentence which the Lord already had passed upon them; *Read ye never in the scriptures, The stone which the builders refused, the same is made the head of the corner: this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation which shall bring*

^u Acts iv. 10—12.^x Matt. xxi.^y Ver. 40.^z Ver. 41.

forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken ; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder^a.

10. This may suffice for proof, that St. Peter's confessing the *Son of man* to be *the Christ, the Son of the living God*, was all one with our Saviour's declaration, *Upon this rock will I build my church, &c.*; because Christ and *the living stone* which God had promised to found in Zion, are (unto sacred writers, and all participants of that Spirit by which they wrote) the selfsame. Nor is there any thing more usual with the Holy Ghost, than to refer like speeches of our Saviour unto places of scripture more different in words than the two former alleged ; albeit there be no such iden- 416
tity of persons, time and place, or continuation of discourse, to manifest their mutual coherence, but only equivalency of their inward meaning ; this method the Holy Spirit useth the rather, I think, because he would accustom us to investigate his sense and meaning, not so much by the like form or character of words, as by the analogy of faith. For, as the apostle saith, *the letter killeth*, because it usually leadeth such as rely upon it to strange and unwholesome senses ; as the identity of our Saviour's and St. Peter's name in the Syriac, or their vicinity in the Greek and Latin, made the rock of salvation become a *rock of offence* unto the Romanist, who, by his stumbling at the word Πέτρος, *falls upon the stone laid in Zion, and shall be broken*^b: yea for this disobedience to this eternal word, and seeking to lay another foundation than what was laid already, *that stone shall fall upon him, and grind him* (at least his doctrine) *to powder* ; as will more fully appear, if we compare their exposition of that

^a Ver. 42, &c.

^b 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

donative they suppose he did bestow upon St. Peter, with that disciple's doctrine whom he loved.

11. As we have shewed from St. Peter and St. Paul, and the general analogy of faith, that Simon the son of Jonah had his name of *Cephas* or Πέτρος from his affinity with the rock of salvation or *chief corner stone*, he being as the first wrought stone in that edifice ; so doth St. John (whose doctrine pregnantly confirms our former exposition of these words, *Thou art Peter, &c.*) make that very confession which Peter uttered as the surest square or line, the perfect index, whereby to try and examine all other stones, whether fitting or rightly proportioned to this everlasting structure. *Dearly beloved*, (saith he,) *believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God : for many false prophets are gone out into the world*^c. How should they know true prophets from false? Such as were true were of God, such as were false, of Antichrist : how should they know such as were of God from such as were of Antichrist? *Hereby shall ye know the spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.*

12. But is every spirit of God that can frame an orthodoxal conceit of this great mystery, and outwardly confess what they inwardly assent unto as undoubtedly true? So should the wicked spirits be of God ; for a spirit of an unclean devil openly said as much in effect as Peter did, what he knew by arguments more sure than most popes do, *I know who thou art, even the Holy One of God* ; yea many came out of the possessed crying, what Peter afterwards confessed, *Thou art the Christ the Son of God*. The mystery, it seems, they had conceived aright, because our Saviour gives them the like injunctions his disci-

^c 1 John iv. 1. Vide Lyram in hunc locum.

ples had upon Peter's confession the one he rebuked, and would not suffer to say; the other, he charged they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ, because this rock was not as yet to be plainly manifested to the world. Although it is most probable, he would not have the unclean spirits at any time to be proclaimers of this mystery: for *unto the wicked said God, What hast thou to do to declare mine ordinances, that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee?* &c.^d If unclean spirits may not be permitted to promulge this or like divine mysteries by the mouths of men, whose bodily members they so⁴¹⁷ possess, as to cause them utter they know not what, may we without exception safely admit all their cathedral decisions (whose souls and minds they have wholly transformed into the similitude of their uncleanness) for heavenly oracles, for embassages of salvation immediately sent from God, for foundations of faith and manners? Christ by the same Psalmist hath said, *To him that disposeth his way aright will I shew the salvation of God*^e.

13. But to proceed by our apostle's former rule; from which, and others of his fully parallel thereunto^f, it is evident, that for a just trial of a spirit speaking by God, there must be both a platform of doctrine rightly proportioned to the former foundation, *Christ*

^d Psalm l. 16.

^e Psalm l. 25.

^f 1 John iv. 12. *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfect in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he*

hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God, in him dwelleth God, and he in God. See 1 John ii. 15, 16.

come in the flesh, and a correspondent edification, not of verbal or school consequences, but of real and material works, proceeding from lively faith and inward sanctity, so testifying the habitation of *Christ the living stone* in the confessor's heart, as Christ's own works and doctrine did the Godhead's bodily dwelling in him; the apostle adds, *Every spirit which confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God*, (that is, is opposite unto the Spirit of God,) *but this is the spirit of Antichrist, of whom ye have heard how that he should come; and now already he is in the world*^g. A spirit of Antichrist then is manifested, by a contrariety in the form of doctrine, or by an hostility between the very foundations which he and the Spirit of God endeavour to lay; so as the edification of the one doth in the issue menace the demolition of the other. And as this opposition unto God's Spirit is greater or less, so doth it argue the party in whom it is to participate more or less of the spirit of Antichrist. In both these respects of opposition or hostility in the foundation, or in the issue or consequences of all heretical temples or congregations that hitherto have been or can be imagined as possibly future, the structure of the Romish church doth most fully answer to the idea or platform of that edifice, which the apostle hath foretold great Antichrist should erect.

In what sense the papists deny Christ to be come in the flesh.

14. For demonstrating which conclusion, we only suppose, what every one must grant, that if the spirit of unclean devils, he whose coming is by the power of Satan, in guile and deceit, may, without prejudice to his grand hostility against Christ, in formal terms confess the great mystery of salvation, *Christ manifested in the flesh*: for seeing he must be ἀντικείμενος, oppo-

^g 1 John iv. 3.

site unto Christ, not by way of negation or contradiction, but by a positive contrariety or hostility ; Christian religion and Antichristianism must, as all other contraries, agree in some one kind or matter ; and the kind or matter in matters of religion must be the object. If we here only set aside an agreement with true professors in that general transcendent object, that *Christ is the Son of the living God*, the very first principle of Romish religion, even the specifical difference which makes it Romish, is as contrary with the first element of true orthodoxal Christian religion, as fire to water, heat to cold. For if to confess *Christ come in the flesh*, put to death, and raised again, be (as is proved) all one as to acknowledge him *the chief corner stone, rejected of men, but advanced by God* ; if this be the main foundation of Christianity, so all-sufficient that without it no other must be laid ; how were it possible more to deny this truth in effect or consequence, more to oppugn the whole edifice of our faith, than by planting another rock, another foundation, without communication wherewith none can be supported by the former against the gates of hell ?

15. But perhaps we mistake or malign the Romanist, in charging him with shuffling in another foundation besides Christ, in that sense the apostle denies any other foundation can be laid^h. We rather, by too much pressing them with that axiom of his, make him contradict himself ; for elsewhere he saith, *We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*ⁱ.

16. I will not here dispute whether St. Paul in that place mean, we are built upon the persons of the prophets and apostles, they being placed nearer the rock or main foundation itself than we, or rather upon the

Nor doth that place, Rev. xxi. 14, prove any more than that by the apo-

^h 1 Cor. iii. 11.

ⁱ Ephes. ii. 20.

stles' minis-
try the
church was
erected.

main foundation, which both the prophets and the apostles jointly had laid, besides which no other can be laid, Christ crucified and glorified : for he is both the foundation which wholly supporteth and the corner stone which only coupleth the whole building ; in which he is the highest and the lowest, first laid in humility for the disobedient to fall upon, but now exalted unto greatest glory to fall upon them. And as the apostle calls his own scars *the marks of Christ*, because inflicted for Christ's sake ; so may he call Christ *the foundation of the prophets and apostles*, because the only end whereto both prophetic and apostolical laws were directed was to lay this sure foundation.

17. But granting, what they take for granted, the apostle did mean, we were builded upon the prophets and apostles, as upon a second foundation, or first row of stones next in order unto the rock ; do they make Peter a rock or foundation only in this sense ? If they do not, he could not be the rock on which the church is built. If they do, let them give us the right hand of fellowship ; for we accuse them, not for making him such a foundation as the other apostles were, but such as, it is evident, they were not ; yea, such in deed and substance as Christ only is, and should be acknowledged by all the faithful. For in what sense is Christ said to be the foundation ? because he is the head of his church, both for supporting and directing it. Was not Peter such in respect even of his fellow-apostles ? Bellarmine can assign no difference betwixt them but in these very terms^k : All of them, he confesseth, had

^k Dicuntur fundamenta omnes apostoli, ratione gubernationis. Omnes enim fuerunt capita, rectores, et pastores ecclesiæ universæ, sed non eodem modo quo Petrus. Illi enim habuerunt summam, atque amplissimam potestatem ut apo-

œcumenical jurisdiction, but not in such sort as Peter had ; all were infallible, because apostles and ambassadors, but not after the same manner he was : yea, Peter was their head, on whom they did depend ; so did not he on them. This makes Peter the corner stone that coupleth the building. Which doubtless was Christ's peculiar whilst he lived on earth, not communicated unto Peter, as they acknowledge, until his resurrection or ascension. That they tell us then, they make but one primary foundation, and therefore none such as Christ, is as if they should say, they admit no more such popes as *Pius primus* was, because there hath never been nor ever shall be any pope Pius the First but he : for to make Peter such a primate, is to make him a foundation or head of the same rank and 419 order that Christ was, (only his inferior, as successor in time,) or (to use their words) a foundation in Christ's place. So Bellarmine expressly avoucheth¹, where, proving Peter's supremacy or lordship from his name, he thus infers : "Peter only was known by Christ's own name of *Cephas* or *rock*, whereby he is called as often as by any other whatsoever ; yea, this is the peculiar attribute in which he is set out unto us as the foundation and head of the church : therefore Christ, communicating this unto Peter, would have it signified unto

stoli, seu legati, Petrus autem ut pastor ordinarius. Deinde ita habuerunt plenitudinem potestatis, ut tamen Petrus esset caput eorum, et ab illo penderent non e contrario.—Bellar. lib. 1. de Rom. Pont. c. 11.

¹ Cephas Syriace significat petram, ut nos supra docuimus, et Hieronymus testatur in cap. 2. Epistolæ ad Galat. Græce autem significat caput, ut lib. 2. contra Parmenianum annotavit Optatus.

Ac demum unum est ex celeberrimis Christi nominibus. Nihil enim frequentius in scripturis Christus appellatur quam petra. Christus ergo cum solo petro suum ipsius nomen communicans, et nomen illud quo ipse significatur, ut fundamentum et caput ecclesiæ universæ, quid aliud indicare voluit, quam se facere Petrum fundamentum et caput ecclesiæ loco suo?—Ibid. cap. 17.

the world that he meant to make Peter the foundation and head of the church in his own place." Why doth Christ cease to be the foundation in becoming the head stone in the corner? or do they, to avoid open suspicion of Antichristianism, acknowledge him come in the flesh, but gone again to make room for Peter and his successors? Certainly, were the apostle to gather the meaning of Bellarmine's speeches, his inference would be thus: In that he saith, a new head is come in his place, he abrogates the former's authority^m, as he was ambassador between God and man: nor is it now, as the testament given by Moses was in the prophets' time, ready to expire, but already expired by actual succession of another, unto whom Christ, the first visible head (or foundation), did, at his advancement to higher dignity, seal the same commission he had from his Father for transacting all affairs concerning the state of his visible church.

The difference between Christ and the pope much less (by the papists' opinion) than

18. ⁿ But doth the space between heaven and earth more exceed Rome's distance from the utmost ends of the world, than he to whom all power was given in heaven and earth doth the present pope in amplitude of spiritual jurisdiction? Whence is it else that Christ's

^m Heb. viii. 13.

ⁿ Nos non negamus, immo defendimus contra negantes, verbum Dei ministratum per apostolos et prophetas esse primum fundamentum nostræ fidei. Ideo enim credimus, quidquid credimus, quia Deus id per apostolos, et prophetas revelavit; sed addimus, præter hoc fundamentum primum, requiri aliud fundamentum secundarium, id est, ecclesiæ testificationem. Neque enim scimus certo quid Deus revelaverit, nisi ex testimonio ecclesiæ,

et propterea sicut legimus, Christum esse lapidem fundamentalem, et fundamentum primum ecclesiæ, ita legimus Matt. xvi. de Petro, *Super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam*. Itaque fides nostra adhæret Christo primæ veritati revelanti mysteria, ut fundamento primario; adhæret etiam Petro, id est, pontifici proponenti et explicanti hæc mysteria, ut fundamento secundario.—Bellar. de Verbi Dei Interpret. lib. 3. cap. 10. respons. ad 13.

regiment cannot so fully and immediately extend itself ^{between the} unto his church militant, wheresoever scattered upon ^{pope and} the face of the earth, as the pope's may to the East and ^{other bi-} West Indies, from either of which he cannot receive shops.
certain information how his instructions sent thither succeed with his flock, under a year's space at the least. Every pope in his time is a rock, a foundation, a head in Christ's absence from the earth. Might not every one of them in like sort admit a pope, a vicar general, an absolute fellow-monarch, from whom in these remote countries there should be no more appeals to Rome than are from Rome to Christ's throne of majesty? If we speak not of that majesty which he there enjoys, but of that authority which he sometimes had, or we can imagine he could have in regiment of his church, were he now visibly present in the flesh; it is evident that St. Peter and his successors may by our adversaries' doctrine be more properly instyled compeers to Christ, than the best man living besides unto the worst of them. For it must be thought that Christ in his absence ratifies all their decrees without exception, as we may not question them more than we might Christ's own, were he visibly resident in his church. Yet was the authority of Christ's other apostles so ⁴²⁰ mightily overtopped by Peter's supremacy, that they could not be infallible or œcumenical without his approbation? If they were, Peter was not such an head to them, as his successors are to theirs, even to all bishops or inferior ministers throughout the world. If they were not, the pope, if he will be Peter's successor, should make bishops or cardinals, at least eleven, œcumenical pastors of authority infallible, though with such dependency on his plenary power as Christ's other apostles had on Peter's. Or let them resolve us

in other fundamental difficulties which their doctrine ministers.

Of all Peter's prerogatives, those most urged by the Romanists, as alike appertaining to his successors, are most personal.

19. Christ said, *Thou art Peter*; that is, say they, a rock, a head, a foundation in my place. Unto whom was this said? To one of the twelve expressed by name, *Simon the son of Jona*: to whom likewise (singularized by the same express terms of individual difference, and like restraint of present circumstances or occurrences) it was said, *Feed my lambs, feed my sheep*. If any of Christ's speeches (as the pope's advocates grant many^o) were personally directed to St. Peter, questionless these two. By what analogy of faith or rule of grammar can they then extend these to every pope in his generation; or, if any such there have been, or yet may be, unto whom the feminine title of Petra, by right of sex, may better agree than unto Simon Bar-Jona? Yet might the name or title infallible draw the supreme dignity after it, they are much overseen in not giving the name of Peter to every pope. Christ, they confess, is *come in the flesh*, and was in person made head and foundation of the church, and at his departure left Peter in his stead: Peter, the scriptures tell us, *was to follow Christ*; but (as they pretend) left pope Linus in his place; so hath every pope his successor since that time. Yet these latter mightily fail in not nominating others, whiles they themselves are living and visible stones; as Christ without question did St. Peter, whiles conversant with the faithful in the flesh, and Peter Linus in his lifetime.

The papists either admit many foundations or build all

20. But howsoever, they must of necessity either make Peter, Linus, and their ^psuccessors, but one joint permanent foundation, (and so the popes should not be

^o Vide Bellar. lib. 1. de Romano Pontif. cap. 12. et l. 2. cap. 12. paragr. 21. annot. ex Bellarm.

builded upon *the foundation of the prophets and the apostles*, but rather Christ's other apostles upon them; upon whom, likewise, all the faithful, since the apostles' time, should be immediately built :) or, if they do not make Peter and the popes one joint unseparable foundation, they must admit as many several foundations as popes, so as the everlasting rock whereon the church is built could not be truly said one and the same, but by a perpetual equivalency of alteration or succession: as we say corruptible elements, fire or water or candles, remain one and the same, because as one part consumes, another as good comes in the place. This glorious edifice (as hath been observed) stands only by faith, or firm adherence to the foundation: and by the adversaries' own confession, to disclaim the authority of the present Romish church or pope in points of faith, is an heresy or apostasy of the same nature as if a man had renounced Peter for his supreme head, and this all one as if he had cut himself off from being a member of Christ. Wherefore, in respect of us that are now to be edified, the authority of this present pope is equivalent to Christ's: our adherence to the one, in points of faith and manners, must be such as it should have been to the other, had we lived in the days of his visible conversation in the world.

Finally, Christ, St. Peter, and his successors, in regiment of the church militant here on earth, differ, by the Roman account, no otherwise than Romulus, Numa, Ancus, &c. Romulus was first founder of that kingdom, but left other kings of the same rank and order he was; only his dignity after his departure was acknowledged greater in another world, because, as his people were made to believe, he ascended alive into heaven, as a god. Much better might the Romanist

the apostles
beside St.
Peter upon
their mo-
dern popes.

The papists
conceive of
Christ but
as of ano-
ther Romu-
lus.

derive his pseudo-catholic Roman faith from Romulus, the first builder of that great city, that sometimes ruled over the kings of the earth, than from Christ, who did erect a kingdom indeed, but not of this world, wherein none was to succeed him, because he remains *yesterday, to-day, the same for ever* : whence the prophet saith, *This kingdom shall never be destroyed or given to another people, but shall break and destroy all former kingdoms, and itself stand for ever*^p. For any, especially of that nation whose former kings had put this immortal King to death concerning the flesh, to instyle themselves rocks and foundation of this everlasting empire, or absolute spiritual monarchy in this place, doth evidently shew they are the feet of that image, most of which have been and shall be *broken to pieces by that stone cut out without hands out of the mountain, until it become like the chaff of the summer floors, carried away with the wind, and no place be found for them* ; or, as the apostle interprets the prophet, *the Lord shall consume them with the spirit of his mouth, and shall abolish them with the brightness of his coming*^q.

The pope
successor
unto the
check, not to
the promise,
given by
Christ to
St. Peter.

21. Would the Jesuit then know wherein he and his Latian Lord God must take after St. Peter ? Methinks their formal acknowledgment of that general principle, *Christ manifested in the flesh*, and *made the head stone in the corner*, compared with their late mentioned apostasy in seeking to lay another foundation, was lively resembled, if not mystically prefigured, by St. Peter's faith, (immediately after his glorious confession,) eclipsed by interposition of such earthly conceits as perpetually darken their minds. For upon our Saviour's declaration what bodily calamity, what ignominy and reproach should at Jerusalem

^p Daniel ii. 44.

^q 2 Thess. ii. 8.

shortly after befall the rock itself, whereupon that church, against which, he had now said, *the gates of hell should never prevail*, was founded, Peter (as St. Matthew saith) took his Master aside, and friendly checks him, as if he had forgotten his former promise, *Master, be good to yourself; this shall not be unto you*^r. As if he had said, If the gates of hell shall not prevail against your church, or us your poor disciples, I hope you are able to privilege your own person from such disgrace and scorn as none but they can intend against you. So carnally did this great apostle, upon ignorance, conceit Christ's spiritual promise, as the papacy, upon habitual or affected error, doth to this present day. For one principal argument, most usual in the mouths and pens of that great head's chief disciples, to prove the Romish the only church unto which that glorious promise was made, or at least hath been perpetually performed, is, because no temporal or secular power hath ever been able (though many wicked 422 potentates, kings, and emperors—such titles they give to all their enemies—have attempted) either to deface her external pomp, state, and splendour, or so to use the popes or cardinals, or other of her principal and dearest children, as the Jews did our Saviour Christ and his disciples: *They are of the world, and therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them*. But could they unto any child of God more plainly prove themselves heirs to that check given by our Saviour to St. Peter^s, *Go behind me, Satans; ye are an offence, because ye understand not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men*? Could they more evi-

^r Matt. xvi. 22, &c.

^s Bellarmine applies all that is spoken in Peter's commendations unto his successors, whom

he will not have sharers in his reproofs: *Ea quæ dicuntur Petro in triplici sunt differentia; quædam enim dicuntur ei pro se*

dently demonstrate the pope to be that *man of sin* that must be inducted to the church of God by Satan, ὁ ἀντίδικος, the chief adversary or accuser, he himself bearing the name of adversary likewise in his title, Ἀντικείμενος κείμενος ἀντὶ τοῦ θεμελίου τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν^t, a second foundation, in show subordinate, in deed and consequence quite contrary, to that which the prophets and apostles have laid; eternally privileged, if we may believe his followers, from those spurnings of men, from which the precious stone of Sion was not exempted.

22. To collect the sum of late Romanists' comments upon their church's supposed fundamental charter; their confession of *Christ come in the flesh*, and *made head stone in the corner*, though conceived in form of words orthodoxal enough, proves only this, (but this abundantly to all the world,) that the pope, their supreme head, sits in the temple of God, whose circumference in respect of men, who cannot search other men's hearts, is defined by this confession. Their attributing the title of *rock* or fundamental supportance of that spiritual house unto this head, proclaims unto all the world that he *sits as God in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*. For the Hebrew צור, equivalent to the Syriac כּאפּא in that sense they take

tantum; quædam pro se et omnibus Christianis; quædam pro se et successoribus; id quod evidenter colligitur ex ratione diversa, qua ei dicuntur. Nam quæ dicuntur ei, ut uni ex fidelibus, certe omnibus fidelibus dicta intelliguntur. Ut Matt. xviii. *Si peccaverit in te frater tuus*, &c. Quæ dicuntur ei ratione aliqua propria personæ ipsius, ei soli dicuntur, ut, *Vade post me Satana*. Et, *Ter me negabis*, ista enim dicuntur ei ratione pro-

priæ imbecillitatis, et ignorantiae. Quædam dicuntur ei ratione officii pastoralis, quæ proinde dicta intelliguntur omnibus successoribus, ut, *Pasce oves meas*, &c.—Bellar. lib. 2. de Rom. Pont. cap. 12. sect. ultimo.

^t The Romanist makes the pope his god, in that he makes him the rock on which the church is built. Compare Exod. xvii. 6. 1 Cor. x. 4. The Hebr. סלע is taken in the same sense, Psal. xviii. 2. Isai. xxxi. 9.

it, (as affording such impregnable supportance or fortification against the powers of hell, world, or flesh,) is oftener by their own vulgar Latin rendered *Deus*, than *petra* or *rupes*^u, which it directly signifies; because, considered with these circumstances or effects, it is rather a glorious title of the Godhead or Deity itself, than a particular attribute, taken from some Divine propriety, communicable to God's servants in the abstract.

23. Lastly, unto me their common exposition of Christ's speeches unto St. Peter suggests this argument more than demonstrative, that the papacy is led by the spirit of great Antichrist, in that no doctrine of devils can more directly contradict, or more shamefully deny, the virtue and power of *Christ come in the flesh*, nor more peremptorily disannul or cancel his promise there made unto his church, than Jesuitical comments upon it do. Christ's promise was a promise of life and saving health, a full assurance of eternal happiness, to all that should be truly built upon that rock which Peter confessed, or which they say Peter was. They make the tenure of this glorious covenant to be no more but this, that Peter's successors, and such as will build their faith upon them (speaking *ex cathedra*) as upon rocks invincible, shall be indefectible in points of Christian faith and manners; howsoever even these rocks themselves may be, for life and conversation, as wicked as Annas or Caiaphas, or other blinded guides of the Jewish synagogue, that crucified our Saviour.

24. Thus by a pretended successive perpetuity of Peter's faith, they utterly abolish that lively faith whereby he confessed Christ, which is alway included as a necessary condition, without which none can be

How Romish religion denies the virtue and power of Christ come in the flesh.

That Romish faith is not that faith by which St. Peter confessed Christ.

^u This observation will easily approve itself to any that will read the book of Deuteronomy and the Psalms.

capable of that glorious promise, but with it all are made immediate heirs of salvation. Or to speak more plainly, none may expect the least portion of Peter's blessing without Peter's faith; nor can that be in any but such as are born of God: *Every one*, saith St. John, *that is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.* And again, *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he which believeth* (what Peter had confessed) *that Jesus is the Son of God?* And our Saviour himself, to whom his Father *had given power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to all given him by his Father*, tells us, that this life eternal must grow from that root of faith which first did branch in Peter's mouth, but must be so planted as it grew in him, in every heart endued with sure hope, much more in all such as lay challenge to such pre-eminency or prerogative of faith or hope as Peter had; *This is life eternal, that they may know thee* (saith Christ, speaking of his Father) *to be the only very God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ:* so then *God manifested in the flesh* was the rock of salvation whereupon the church is built: he that rightly knows and so believes this truth, hath life eternal dwelling in him.

That the Romish church is neither that rock, nor built upon that rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, because their faith is unsound.

25. But shall such a faith as may be severed from charity, shall such a knowledge of Christ as may be in them to whom Christ shall say, *Depart from me, I never knew you*,—I say not, make any so impregnable a rock, but so fasten any to that rock so impregnable, as the gates of hell shall not be able to dispossess him of eternal life? Whiles we produce the late cited or other testimonies, alike pregnant to condemn the pontificians for denying justification only by faith, they think themselves fully acquitted with this solution,

that our assurance of salvation relies not upon faith as alone, but as it is the foundation of charity, and accompanied with other Christian virtues. We never taught, (as shall be shewed in that controversy,) that faith, unless thus attended, could with true confidence plead our cause before God, which yet, though thus attended, it only pleads. But here our adversaries must be contented to take their payment in their own coin; for if no man can be justified or made heir of salvation, it is impossible any should be a lively stone, or living member, much less a supreme head, or sure foundation of that spiritual house, always victorious over death and hell, without a faith so appointed, as in the former case they require, without a faith as clearly testifying Christ dwelling in men by works flowing from it, as their edification upon him by an orthodoxal form of words. Whosoever is destitute of a faith thus bearing fruit unto salvation, is so far from ⁴²⁴ being a rock or sure foundation for others to build upon, that he himself (if we may believe our Saviour, Matt. vii. 26.) builds all his hopes upon the sand: *Whosoever heareth these my words, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which hath builded his house upon the sand: and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and the fall thereof was great.* Not every one therefore that saith unto our Saviour, as Peter did, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*, but he that expresseth his faith and hope by works answerable to Christ's conversation in the flesh and his Father's will, *shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*; because he only is built upon that rock which the floodgates of hell cannot undermine or overthrow: for, *Whosoever* (saith our Saviour) *heareth of me these words, and doeth the same, I will liken him to a wise*

man, which builded his house on a rock : and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not : for it was grounded upon a rock.

26. Let the Jesuit either produce any heresy broached since our Saviour's incarnation, or frame a conceit of any but logically possible before his coming unto judgment, which in outward profession, not disclaiming the former main foundation of Christianity, *God manifested in the flesh*, can in deed and issue more evidently overthrow it, more distinctly contradict either those fundamental precepts of salvation last cited, or more fully evacuate the often mentioned promise made unto St. Peter, than the foundation of Romish religion, as Romish, doth ; and I will do public penance in sackcloth and ashes, for laying the imputation of Antichristianism upon it. Our Saviour saith, *Whosoever heareth these words, and doeth them not, doth build his house upon the sand* : they teach the contradictory as an article of faith ; That the pope, or a council of bishops assembled by his appointment, instructed by his infallibility, confirmed by his plenary power, do always build upon the same rock as Peter did ; yea, that the pope himself, how wicked soever, is that very rock whereupon the church (that is, in their language, the bishops thus assembled) is built ; the œcumenical pastor that must keep them, and by them all Christ's flock, from going astray ; the supreme head, that by his virtue and influence must sustain every member of Christ's body (here on earth) from falling into heresy, or approaching the territories of hell, through any kind of error or infidelity.

27. ^uOur Saviour promised in solemn manner, *ex*

^u Præterea, ecclesia congregata, sive concilium, propriissime est ecclesia Christi, ut etiam adversarii concedunt : nam ec-

cathedra, the gates of hell shall never prevail against his church. What church? The catholic. What catholic? visible or invisible? triumphant or militant? Visible and militant. What catholic, visible, militant church? The Roman, that consists of divers members. In it some are pastors, some are sheep; whether have better interest in that promise? Pastors. Of pastors, some are prelates, some inferiors; whether are to be preferred before the other? Prelates doubtless; 425 for of them consists the body of the church representative, which is most properly called *the church*, and next in reversion unto Peter's prerogative. Did the gates of hell then never prevail against the greatest Romish prelates? I nominate no particular person; I speak only of them as the scripture doth of drunkards, whoremongers, adulterers, dogs, enchanters. Many of highest place in that church have for a long time lived, and, for aught their followers can or care to say unto the contrary^v, died, such as the Spirit of God hath ex-

clesia est congregatio fidelium, ergo quo magis fideles sunt congregati, et uniti, eo magis proprie sunt ecclesia: at stultum est, cum aliquid de alio absolute pronunciatur, excipere id, quod propriissime per illud significatur; ergo cum Christus dicit, *Super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam*, stulte excipitur ecclesia universalis congregata, cum ea propriissime sit ecclesia.—Bellar. lib. 2. de Conc. Aut. cap. 15. Of this church the pope is the foundation, as he avoucheth in the words going before: Quod est in domo fundamentum, est in corpore caput, et in grege pastor. Ut enim fundamentum non pendet a domo, sed domus a fundamento; ita etiam caput non pendet a corpore, sed corpus a capite, et pastor non pendet a

grege, sed grex a pastore. His conclusion is; Papa præest omnibus loco Christi, quibus Christus ipse invisibiliter præest, et quibus etiam præesset visibiliter, si visibiliter adesset: Christus autem præest, et præesset visibiliter, si adesset visibiliter, non solum ecclesiis particularibus, sed etiam toti ecclesiæ universali, et generalibus conciliis: igitur etiam papa præest ecclesiæ universali. Either is not the Romish church representative that church spoken of Matt. xvi., or else Christ's promise hath failed.

^v Caput ecclesiæ non potest quidem errare docendo falsam doctrinam, tamen potest errare male vivendo, et male etiam sentiendo, ut privatus homo, atque hoc tantum videmus accidisse Adamo: male enim aliquando

cluded from the kingdom of heaven; such as God's word tells us hell must swallow up with open mouth. Are they the church, and may hell-gates prevail against them, and yet not prevail against the church?

28. But if a woman, an whorish woman, cannot be taken without an excuse, may we think those effeminate sworn creatures of servitude to that great strumpet can want an answer? No, this distinction is always at hand. Their popes and cardinals may, as err, so go to hell. But how? As private doctors, not as œcumenical pastors, not as they speak *ex cathedra*: so to my remembrance I have read of a proud Romish prelate, that being reprov'd for his secular pomp, made answer, He followed these fashions as he was duke, not as an archbishop. But the reprover's reply hath made the apology (better than which no Jesuit can make for the pope) most ridiculous ever since. If this be so, quoth the shepherd, (such was the pastor God had appointed to rebuke the madness of this false prophet,) I pray resolve me what shall become of my lord duke, if the archbishop go to the Devil. If many, sometimes popes, be now in hell, (as no Jesuit, I think, will profess any moral hope that all are saved,) what is become of the church representative, which lodged in their brains? Hath the number of glorified saints been increased by their departure from earth? Were they ever a whit more happy for being heirs to that glorious promise, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church?* or were their comments upon that place orthodoxal? What was the comfort St. Pe-

vixit, et forte etiam male de Deo sensit, tamen non male docuit.—Bellarminus de Ecclesia Militante, lib. 3. cap. 16. Resp. ad prim. Some of their popes, by their own writers' confession,

have been strangely cut off, in the very acts of adultery, or other sins by them accounted mortal. Christ's promise unto St. Peter but a mere mockery by the Jesuits' construction.

ter himself could ever have reaped thence? Only this: Though Satan may so sift thee, that thy soul may go to hell before thy body descend to the grave, yet rest assured of this, that thy faith, which in cathedral resolutions shall never fail thee in thy lifetime, shall survive in thy successors when thou art dead: but to what purpose, if notwithstanding this prerogative, all may descend one after another into hell?

29. Or if their doctrine were true, to what end did Christ come in the flesh? only to build a church, which like a lamp or candle may gloriously shine, whiles there is an uninterrupted succession of popes to propagate the splendour; but whose glory when that expires, for aught that glorious promise adds unto it, must be extinguished, as the light goes out when the oil is spent? Better assurance than every pope for his time hath, 426 St. Peter by their doctrine had none from those words of our Saviour. For whatsoever power or prerogative was in them bequeathed to him doth descend by inheritance to his successors. And would the meanest Jesuit now living have gloried much in a life, graced with no greater visible church dignity than St. Peter was, perpetually exposed to like danger, without any other solace to support it, save only this, that his posterity should enjoy the same privileges? But now that the glory and dignity of the Romish church is become so great, and the Jesuits' portion thereby grown so fat, they can be well content to soothe up the pope in this conceit, that howsoever his person may go to hell, (a place it seems not much dreaded because unknown,) yet hell-gates shall never prevail against his faith, which hath brought such large possessions to the church, both which he may infallibly entail to his successors until the world's end. But (as I said before) what then shall become of that cathedral faith? shall

it augment the quire of God's elect, or can they make as many St. Faiths as have been popes?

The Romish church, of all idols that are or have been, the most vain and foolish.

30. Herein appears the excess of these days' impiety in respect of former, that this imaginary idea of Romish faith should be more superstitiously adored than any other idol in the world ever was; although that of the apostle may be more properly said of it than any other, *nihil est in mundo*. Other idols represented either men or beasts, some permanent creature or real quality; this is a fancy of a chimera, a shape of nothing; or if by nature and essence aught, it is such a conceit or mental quality as may be in devils. Existence it hath none, but as eclipses of the sun, by fits or courses when the pope shall speak *ex cathedra*. What shall become of it and the colours in the rainbow, after the day of judgment, are two questions of like use and consequence; and of these two objects, the one as fit to direct men's courses by sea or land, as the other to conduct us towards heaven. The dazzled imaginations of these idolaters, that can thus conceit this faith to be spiritual, and eternal by succession, when it cannot save them in whom it is, are much worse than some foolish heathen's dreams of an immortal fame that was to accompany their mortal souls, (as they esteemed them,) and argue in these sons of Antichrist, either an incogitancy or unbelief of Christ (who lives for ever) come in the flesh, or a secure worldly hope he shall never, or not this long time, come to judgment.

31. St. Peter hath foretold, *that there shall come in the last days mockers, which will walk after their lusts, and say, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers died, all things continue alike from the beginning of the creation*^x. Atheists and liber-

^x 2 Pet. iii. 3.

tines, I know, here are literally meant: but as the prophets usually prefigure our future bliss by Jerusalem's present glory, or other known felicity, by which perhaps it was represented unto them; so might St. Peter shadow out unto us the mystery of iniquity according to that rude draught which it had in his time. For the substance, native quality, or proportion of the atheists' and the modern godless Romanists' mockery, they are the same, only the one is more rude and rough hewn, the other more smoothly varnished with hypocrisy, and overlaid with artificial colours. The blunt atheist, like a lewd debtor that simply denies his bond, imagines the Lord will never come to call him to an account. Their subtle Romanist, like a crafty companion that acknowledgeth the debt, but no set day of payment specified, save only "to-morrow," hopes to drive off God Almighty from day to day, putting Christ's coming as far from him the next three years to come, as it was the last three past; and so would hold on these hundred thousand years, if the world should stand so long, because Antichrist, who by professed enmity against Christ shall give the world three years' warning (according to the years of an hireling) of its dissolution, (if we may believe this mocker,) is not yet revealed: nor ever shall be to him, unto whom, *since the patriarchs and apostles died, all things continue as they did from the beginning of the new creation*, (man's redemption,) without any general apostasy or decay of Peter's faith, which remains still as fresh and lively as when he first confessed Christ. Not the Jew more sottish in expecting his Messias, than this hypocrite in deferring Antichrist's coming. And no marvel, when that which first caused the Jew so grievously to stumble, and since retains him in his unbelief, is made the only ground of the Roman catholic's faith.

A parallel
of atheistical and
papistical
mockery.

The Jew
and the
Jesuit are
alike be-
witched, the
one in ex-
pecting
Messias al-
ready come
and cruci-

fied by his
fathers, the
other in
looking for
Antichrist
already re-
vealed and
adored by
him as his
god.

Hell, by an approved experiment of the one's fall, knew well the same charm would enchant the other ; both being equally tainted with a superstitious heathenish conceit, that their teachers could not err, because they sit in the seats of such as were infallible in their lifetimes. And hence it is they are so blind and see it not, bewitched and bewitching others with continual reiterating that magic spell of *Templum Domini*, "The church, the church," words whose meaning they understand no more than simple women do waggish scholars' medicines, or charms for the toothache. Their ignorance (though) may put us in mind of another mockery they make of our Saviour's words.

32. For where he promised *hell-gates should never prevail against his church*, meaning against no true Christian soul espoused to him by an indissoluble knot of faith and everlasting love, these mockers dispossess the Christian world of this glorious hope by a double delusion ; first persuading it that the universal church militant may encamp in one man's breast ; upon whom though hell shut her gates, the simple (such as they would make us all) must believe the church is safe, because he came not within them as an heretic : for so, in the second place, though our Saviour promiseth in terms as ample and majestical as can be devised, that not hell-gates, that is, no power or force of hell, shall be able to hold play with that church, whose safe-conduct to his heavenly kingdom he there undertook ; they make the meaning of his assurance to be but this : No heresy (as if hell-gates were furnished with no other munition) shall ever make breach upon the Roman consistory, or approach the pope's seat of dignity. Thus, to support the pope's supremacy, they would make Christ so to shuffle, as if a prince (were it possible any prince could be so base) should warrant his

confederate's safe-conduct through his territories upon as high terms as his sovereignty or supremacy would stretch unto, and yet, challenged upon the other's mis-carriage, interpret his meaning to have been but this : I did warrant him he should not die of poison administered by any physician of mine in my dominions ; that no violence should be offered him by thieves and robbers, or other unruly subjects, I undertook not.

CHAP. IX.

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That the Romanist's Belief of the Church's infallible Authority cannot be resolved into any Testimony better than human : whence the main Conclusion immediately follows, That the Romanist in Obeying the Church-decrees, without Examination of them by God's word, prefers Man's laws before God's.

1. SEEING it hath been manifested, as well by ostensive proof from scriptures, as by deduction to inconveniences most contrary to the analogy, and prejudicial to the main foundation of faith, that St. Peter was not the church, nor such a head as the pope doth make himself of all the faithful ; the principal point is clear, that the Romanist's belief of such a transcendent, absolute, œcumenical authority in the church as might warrant our obedience to the former decrees, cannot be resolved into any Divine testimony or absolute promise of Christ ; in neither of which the pope can have any interest, but only by right derived from St. Peter.

2. To follow them a little in their school humour, only reckoning the speculative probabilities that can be brought for them, without computation of their blasphemies, or other dangerous consequences wherewith their doctrine heretofore hath been and must be further charged ; let us try what strength the other joints have in themselves, and see in the next place what

proof they can make their popes are successors to such preeminences as Peter had. Albeit even this joint, as all the rest of their religion, is quite benumbed, and utterly deprived of sense, by the deadly blow lately given to the principal nerve, whence life and motion must be derived to the whole body of their religion. For if we consider the intensive perfection of that pre-eminence or estimation which Peter in respect of his fellows had, either with his Lord or with his flock; this was founded in a correspondent excess of his love, his lively faith, and diligent feeding; unto no one of which good qualities the popes profess themselves heirs infallible. Or if we respect the extent or amplitude of St. Peter's extraordinary sovereignty, it was the same with David's kingdom, or Christ's own pastoral charge, and reached but from Dan to Beersheba. At the utmost, it and the circumcision had the same circumference; within which, how great soever his authority was, the pope can have no pretence to be his successor therein. For the edification of the people committed to him by our Saviour was to be finished before Jerusalem's destruction; since which time Israel hath been perpetually scattered amongst the nations without a shepherd to gather them. And when it shall please the Lord, as it is probable it will, to reduce them to his fold, their ruler shall be of their own people, strangers shall have no more dominion over them.

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The adversaries' folly in deriving œcumenical authority perpetually infallible from St. Peter.

3. Had the pope derived his right from St. Thomas, Bartholomew, or other apostle, which have no writings extant, this might have yielded some surmises not so easy to be disproved, that Romish traditions did contain the sum at least of all these apostles' unwritten doctrine: if from St. Paul, the great doctor of the Gentiles, and first planter of faith amongst the Romans, (as much commended by him as any other of his children

in Christ,) the improbability had been much less than now it is in Peter's case, that the bishop of Rome, if any, should have succeeded him. But when that people began to grow out of love with the truth, *fashioning themselves unto this present world*, (the disease whereof St. Paul forewarned them^y,) it was Satan's policy to present unto them (longing after such a monarchical state as their heathenish predecessors had) such shows of Peter's supremacy and residency at Rome, as by the Divine permission had either crept into some of the ancients' religious cogitations, or else in time of darkness have been shuffled by the predecessors of these cheating mates late discovered into their writings, as fit bates to entice them unto this derivation of that absolute power from Peter, to their greater condemnation and our good. For God no doubt in his providence ordered this their blindness to illuminate us, as he did the fall of the Jews to confirm the Gentiles in faith; seeing of all the apostles, Peter's prerogatives (as hath been shewed) were most evidently personal, all to determine with himself; unto which observation his own writings also give testimony. Even a little before he was to leave the world, where he most manifested his earnest desire of preserving his flock sound in faith after his death, he gives no intimation (as shall be shewed more at large hereafter^z) of any successor unto whom they were to repair. His present Epistle he foresaw would be more available to this purpose than any tradition from him: *I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though that ye have knowledge, and be established in the present truth. For I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; seeing I know that the*

^y Rom. xij. 2.^z Chap. xxiii.

time is at hand, that I must lay down this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. I will endeavour therefore always that ye also may be able to have remembrance of these things after my departing^a.

St. Peter knew not his successors should be infallible.

3. As for peculiar direction of later times, whence perpetual infallibility must be derived; it cannot be gathered from his writings that he knew so much as his brother Paul did. Albeit in this point, these two great pillars of Christ's church, more famous than all their fellow apostles besides for present efficacy of their personal ministry, come far behind the disciple whom Jesus loved; whose written ambassage was in a peculiar sense to tarry till Christ's last coming unto judgment, as he himself did unto Christ's first coming to destroy Jerusalem, and forewarn the nations. Besides the doctrine of common salvation, necessary for all to know, plentifully set down in this disciple's epistle, his revelations contain infallible directions peculiar to every age. And as in some one gift or other every apostle almost exceeds his fellows; so, if amongst all any one was to have this prerogative of being the ordinary pastor, or to have ordinary successors as Aaron (though inferior to Moses in personal prerogatives 430 during his life) had after his death, this doubtless was St. John; who ascribes that unto the diligent expositors, hearers, or readers of his books, which the Romanist appropriates to such as rely upon the visible church's determinations; never questioning whether it be that Babylon which St. John decipheres or no: *Blessed is he (saith St. John) that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.* Blessed they are that read it with fear and

^a 2 Pet. i. 12, &c.

reverence, or so affected as this disciple was : for unto such the Lord will by means ordinary, by sober observation of the event, reveal his secret intent, as he did it unto him by the extraordinary gift of prophecy, *for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*, Revel. xix. 10.

5. It is evident the Spirit of God intended to shew John, and John to shew the faithful, all the eclipses that should befall the church until the world's end. His prophecies since his death were so to instruct the world of all principal events present or to come, as histories do of matters forepast. Now as he in our times, wherein God inspires not men with Moses' spirit, is accounted the best antiquary that is most conversant and best seen in the faithful records of time ; not he that can take upon him to divine as Moses did of the world's state in former ages : so since the gift of prophecy ceased, he is to be esteemed the most infallible teacher, the safest guide to conduct others against the forces of hell ; chiefly heresies or doctrines of devils that can best interpret him who first descried them, and in his lifetime forewarned the churches of Asia (planted by St. Paul and watered by him,) of the abominations that threatened shortly to overspread them, and after them the whole visible church, until these later times. Doth the pope then profess more skill in St. John's Revelations than any other? If he do, let him make proof of his profession by the evidence of his expositions. But from this apostle he pretends none at all, and we demand but any tolerable proof of succession from St. Peter.

6. A supreme œcumenical head (say the parasites to the see apostolic) is as necessary now as in St. Peter's time ; therefore he must *jure divino* have a successor. But neither doth scripture nor reason admit any such

head as they have moulded in their brains, either then or now. As hath been abundantly proved^b; and their own instances, brought to illustrate the probability of such a device, contradict them. For admit that Christ and earthly princes stood in like need of deputy-governors in their absence; would the king of Spain, were he to go on pilgrimage unto his kingdom of Jerusalem, leave but one deputy over all the dominions of Spain and Portugal, the West Indies, Sicily, Naples, and Milan? or leaving but one, would endue him with such absolute power over all his subjects in these nations, as they imagine Christ doth the pope over every Christian soul throughout the whole world? What spirit, then, 431 (may we think,) did possess Bellarmine^c, when he avouched that the church and commonweals are different in this case? Let us hear the difference. The church catholic must be one by communion with one head: so must the liege people of every monarch

^b Vide lib. 2. cap. 29.

^c Respondeo, non esse eandem rationem politici et ecclesiastici regiminis. Si quidem orbis terrarum non necessario debet esse unum regnum, proinde non necessario postulat unum qui omnibus præsit; at ecclesia tota unum est regnum, una civitas, una domus, et ideo ab uno tota regi debet. Cujus differentia illa est ratio, quod ad conservationem politicorum regnorum non necessario requiratur, ut omnes provinciæ servant easdem leges civiles, et eosdem ritus. Possunt enim, pro locorum et personarum varietate, diversis uti legibus et institutis, et idcirco non requiritur unus, qui omnes in unitate contineat. Ad conservationem vero ecclesiæ necesse est, ut omnes conveniant in ea-

dem fide, iisdem sacramentis, iisdemque præceptis divinitus traditis, quod sane fieri non potest, nisi sint unus populus, et ab uno in unitate contineantur.—Bellarm. lib. 1. Re Rom. Pont. cap. 9. sub finem. He acknowledgeth it were convenient the whole world should be governed by one civil monarch. Were it possible to create surely one without bloodshed or wrong, it were requisite he or any in his behalf should resolve us why the whole church might not as truly be one people by communion with Christ their head, as the Tartars and Spaniards by subordination to one lord, to wit, the king of Spain, suppose he were lord of both, and they as far distant each from other as they are.

be one by subordination to one sovereign, whether resident amongst them, or far absent. Why may not Christ then, though absent, be that only supreme head, whence universally the church receiveth unity? or why may not he rule in it, though dispersed through many nations, as effectually by his angels and ordinary ministers of the gospel, as the pope doth by his nuncios, fallible legates, or other inferior prelates?

7. But though reason and scripture fail them, yet councils, histories, and traditions may be mustered to their aid. These are the first springs of these many waters, whereon the great whore sits. From what history therefore do they believe the pope is Peter's successor? from history canonical or Divine? no secular, monkish, or ecclesiastical at the best, upon which the best faith that can be founded is but human; and their professed villainy in putting in and out whatsoever they please into what writing soever, (God's word only excepted,) makes it more than doubtful, whether many ancient writers did ever intimate any such estimate of the Romish church as is now fathered upon them; or rather this foul iniquity late revealed, whilst some have been taken in the manner, hath been long time concealed as a mystery of the Romish state. But they believe not this succession from express written history, but from tradition partly. From tradition of whom? Of men—What men? Men obnoxious to error, and parties in this present controversy; yet neither partial nor erroneous while they speak *ex cathedra*, saith the Jesuit. But who shall assure us what they have spoken *ex cathedra* concerning this point? The councils—What councils? Councils assembled by the pope; councils of men for the most part as ill qualified as carnally minded, and so palpably carried away with faction, that to attribute any Divine authority unto

The uncertainty of popish councils or traditions.

them, were to blaspheme the Holy Spirit. Councils which the papists themselves acknowledge not of sufficient authority, unless they follow the pope's instructions; from whom likewise they must receive their approbation. The pope must assure us the council (which perhaps elected him, rejecting a competitor every way more sufficient) doth not err. But that the pope is lawfully elected; that so elected, he cannot err in this assertion, who shall assure us? He himself or his predecessors. This then is the last resolution of our faith, if it rely upon the church.

8. We must absolutely believe every pope in his own cause: first, that he himself is, secondly, that all his predecessors up to St. Peter were, infallible. When as many of them, within these few hundred years late past, (by their own followers' confession,) were such, as whatsoever must derive its pedigree from them, may justly be suspected to have first descended from the father of lies; such as not speaking *ex cathedra* were so far from the esteem of absolute infallibility, that such as knew them best did trust them least in matters of secular commodity, and if they were found *unfaithful in the wicked mammon, who will trust them in the true*^d? Not papists themselves^e, unless they speak *ex cathedra*. Then belike our Saviour did not foresee this exception from his general rule; or Judas by this knack might have proved himself or any other knave as faithful a pastor as St. Peter.

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A pope's testimony of himself or his predecessors is authentic.

9. But if a pope shall teach *ex cathedra* that he is Peter's lawful successor, and therefore of Divine infallible authority in expounding all the former places, we must, notwithstanding our Saviour's caveat, believe

^d Luke xvi. 11.

saith our Saviour in the same place, ver. 10.

^e *He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much,*

him. Why? Because it must be supposed he hath Divine testimony for this assertion. As what—either Divine history, Divine tradition, or Divine revelation? Divine history they disclaim, nor can impudency itself pretend it. It may be he hath the perpetual traditions of his predecessors. But here again we demand what Divine assurance they can bring forth, that every pope from St. Peter downwards did give express cathedral testimony to this perpetual succession in like authority? Suppose (what no Jesuit dare avouch, unless he first consult his superiors whether he must not of necessity say so for maintenance of the pope's dignity) that this assertion had been expressly conveyed from St. Peter to the present pope without interruption; yet if any one of them did receive it from his predecessor, having it but as a private man, or upon his honesty, he might err in delivering it to his successor, so might the third believing in him. For no belief can be more certain than its proper object, or immediate ground. If that be fallible, the belief must needs be uncertain, obnoxious to error, and at the best human. No better is the pope's testimony, unless given *ex cathedra*; and no better is the ground of his own belief of what his predecessors told him, unless they told it him so speaking. Wherefore though this present pope should teach *ex cathedra, viva voce*, that he is Peter's lawful successor, yet unless he can prove that none of his predecessors did ever neglect so to avouch the same truth, it is evident that he speaks more than he can possibly know by any Divine testimony, either of history or unwritten tradition. It is evident again, he binds us to believe that by Divine faith which he cannot possibly know himself but only by faith human. For Popes bind us to believe by Divine the only ground of his assertion is this supposed per-

faith their reports of matters forepast, which they cannot believe by any other faith but human and fallible.

petual tradition; and this is but human, unless it be perpetually delivered *ex cathedra*. Nor is there any other means possibly under the sun, nay, either in heaven or earth, for to know matters of this nature forepast, but either the testimony of others that have gone before us, who either were themselves, or took their relations upon trust from such as were present, when the things related were acted, or else by revelation from him who was before all times, and is a present spectator, an eyewitness of every action.

10. Our knowledge of matters forepast by the former means, (though popes themselves be the relators, unless their relation be cathedral,) as hath been proved, are but human and fallible; things known by immediate revelation from God are most certain, because the immediate relator is most infallible. Doth the pope by this means know what his predecessors or St. Peter thought concerning this perpetual succession, or generally all matters concerning this point long since forepast? He may as easily tell us what any of his successors shall do or say a hundred years hence. And thus much if this present pope will undertake, the Christian people then living may safely believe what the pope then being shall say of this, or both of their predecessors. But to believe man as an infallible pro-

433phet of things past, which cannot prove himself a true foreteller of things to come, were to invert God's ordinance and mock his word. For it hath been a perpetual law of God, that no man should ever be believed more than man, or by any faith more than human, though in matters present, whereof he might have been an eyewitness, unless he shewed his participation of the Divine Spirit by infallible prediction of things to come, or evidency of miracles fully answering

He that will be reputed a prophet of times forepast, must shew himself a prophet of things to come.

to the prediction of God's word already written, as shall be shewed at large in the next section^d.

11. If we put together the first elements of Romish faith, as they have been founded apart, they make no such compound as the simple and ignorant papists (who in policy are taught to read this lesson, as little children untaught will, by guessing at the whole in gross without spelling the parts) believe they do. First, their prerogatives they give to Peter are blasphemous. Secondly, their allegations, to prove that their popes succeed as full heirs to all Peter's prerogatives, are ridiculous. Whence it must needs follow, that their faith is but a compost of folly and blasphemy. This pretended perpetuity of tradition, or suspicious tale of succession from Peter, is the best warrant they have that the church doth not err in expounding the places alleged for her infallibility; and their belief of their infallibility in such expositions, the only security their souls can have, that obeying the former decree of worshipping the consecrate host, of communicating under one kind, they do not contemptuously disobey God's principal laws, mangle Christ's last will and testament, vilify his precious body and blood. Seeing then they themselves confess the places brought by us against their decrees to be Divine, and we have demonstrated that men's belief of that infallible authority in making such decrees to be merely human, the former conclusion is most firm, that whilst men obey these decrees against that natural sense and meaning which the former passages of scripture suggest so plainly to every man's conscience, that the church's pretended authority set aside, none would ever question whether they could admit any restraint, they obey men more than God, human laws more than

^d See chap. 11.

Divine ; and much better believe the traditions of human fancy, of whose forgery for others' worldly gain there be strong presumptions, than the express written testimony of the Holy Spirit, in the especial points of their own salvation.

The present pope's authority is greater than history, traditions, or councils, or ought that can be pretended for it.

12. Or if unto the testimony of God's Spirit recorded in scriptures, we add history, tradition, councils, or former popes' decrees, or whatsoever possibly may be pretended to prove the present pope's authority, it must still be supposed greater and better known than all that can be brought for it or against it, as will appear if we apply our argument used before : That authority is always greater which may try all others and must be tried by none ; but such is the pope's declaration or determination of all points in controversy, whether about the canon or sense of scriptures, over those which are brought for it, whether about the truth, true meaning, or authority of unwritten traditions ; whether about the lawfulness of councils, or their authentic interpretations ; in one word, his determinations are monarchical, and may not be examined (as St. Austin or others of the ancient Fathers' 434 writings may) by any law written or unwritten. So Bellarmine^e, suitable to the Trent council, expressly avoucheth : " The Fathers were only doctors or expositors, the pope is a judge." What then is the difference between a judge and an expositor ? " To explain

^e Aliud est interpretari legem more doctoris, aliud more judicis : ad explicationem more doctoris, requiritur eruditio ; ad explicationem more judicis requiritur autoritas. Doctor enim non proponit sententiam suam ut necessario sequendam, sed solum quatenus ratio suadet : at judex proponit ut sequendam neces-

sario. Aliter accipimus glossas Bartholi et Baldi, aliter declarationem principis. Augustinus igitur et cæteri Patres in commentariis fungebantur officio doctorum : at concilia et pontifices funguntur officio judicis a Deo sibi commissio.—Bellar. de Verbo Dei interpret. lib. 3. cap. 10. respons. ad 16.

as a judge, there is required authority; to explain as a doctor or expositor, only learning is requisite. For a doctor doth not propose his sentence as necessary to be followed, but only so far as reason shall counsel us; but a judge proposeth his sentence to be followed of necessity." Whereof then will the pope be judge? Of expounding scriptures; these places of scripture which make for his pretended authority. Must his sentence herein of necessity be followed? By Bellarmine it must, albeit we see no reason for it, either out of scripture or nature. It is for doctors to bring reasons for their expositions, but the pope needs not except he will, nor may we exact it of a judge. So he adds more expressly, "We admit not of Bartolus' or Baldus' glosses as we do of emperors' declarations. Austin and other Fathers in their commentaries supply the places of teachers, but the council and popes exercise the function of judges, whereunto God hath designed them." But how shall we know that God hath committed all judgment unto them, seeing we have been taught by his word that *he hath committed all judgment unto his Son, because all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father*^f? we read not of any other to whom the like authority is given by God or his Son; yet of one whose very name shall import the usurpation of like authority, that is, ἀντι-χρίστος, Christ's vicar-general, unto whom the Son, as must be supposed, doth delegate the same judiciary power the Father delegated unto him.

13. But may a prince's declaration in no case be examined by his subjects? Yes, though in civil matters, it may, so far as it concerns their consciences; as whether it be consonant to God's word or no; whether it make more for the health of their souls to suffer

^f John v. 22, 23.

what it inflicts upon the refusers, or to act what it commands. To control, countermand, or hinder the execution of it, by opposition of violence or contrary civil power, subjects may not. But for any, but man, to usurp such dominion over his fellow-creatures' souls as earthly princes have over their subjects' goods, lands, or bodies, is more than monarchical, more than tyrannical, the very idea of Antichristianism. And what I would commend unto the reader as a point of especial consideration, this assertion of Bellarmine concerning the pope's absolute authority, directly proves him, as was avouched before^g, to be a supreme head or foundation, of the selfsame rank and order with Christ, no way inferior to him in the intensive perfection, but only in the extent of absolute sovereignty. For greater sovereignty cannot be conceived than this, that no man may examine the truth, or equity of commands or consequences immediately derived from it, though immediately concerning their eternal joy or misery. No prince did ever delegate such sovereign power to his vicegerent or deputy; nor could he, unless for the time being (at least) he did utterly relinquish his own
 435 supreme authority, or admit a full compeer in his kingdom. Bellarmine's^h distinctions, of a primary and

^g Cap. 8. §. 17, &c. Bellarmine, to prove the pope is absolutely above the universal church, useth these words: Omnia nomina, quæ in scripturis tribuuntur Christo, unde constat eum esse supra ecclesiam, eadem omnia tribuuntur pontifici.—Bellar. de Conciliorum Auct. lib. 2. cap. 17. initio.

^h Christum caput esse ecclesiæ universæ libentissime confitemur, neque ullum hominem, ac ne angelum quidem illi æqua-

mus; quod esset proprie duo capita in ecclesiæ corpore constituere, at quin sub Christo capite summo vicarius ejus in terris caput, ut sic dicam, ministeriale, non principale recte nominetur, negari nullo modo potest; siquidem ut in republica temporali caput omnium principale rex est, sub rege deinde capita sunt provinciarum, ii qui dicuntur proreges, et sub proregibus capita sunt urbium singularum, certi quidam prætores, et

secondary foundation, of a ministerial and principal head of the church, may hence be described to be but mere stales set to catch gulls. Their conceit of the pope's copartnership with Christ is much better resembled and more truly expressed by the poet's imaginations of Jupiter and Augustus Cæsar's fraternity:

Divisum imperium cum Jove, Cæsar habet:

Jove and Cæsar are kings and gods:

But Jove of heaven; that's the only odds.

That Christ should retain the title of the Supreme Head over the church militant, and the reality of supremacy over the church triumphant, our adversaries are not offended; because there is small hope of raising any new tribute from the angels and saints in heaven to the Romish church's use; and as little fear that Christ should take any secular commodity from it which anciently it hath enjoyed.

14. But though it were true, that we were absolutely bound to obey an absolute monarch, of whose right none doubts; yet may we examine whether every potentate that challengeth monarchical jurisdiction over others, or gives forth such insolent edicts in civil matters, as the pope doth in spiritual, do not go beyond his authority in these particulars; albeit his lawful prerogatives in respect of others be without contro-

sub prætoribus quælibet familia suum habet caput, ipsum videlicet patrem familias, &c. Ita quoque in ecclesia Dei, summum caput omnium hominum et angelorum Christus est: sub Christo in terris caput omnium Christianorum est pontifex maximus: sub illo episcopi, sub episcopis parochi capita sunt Christianæ

multitudinis.—Bellar. in appendice ad libros de summo Pont. [lib. 2.] cap. 24. His similitude fails in this, that they admit of no appeal from the pope to Christ, no examination of his decrees by God's word: nor is the pope by their doctrine subordinate in such sort unto Christ, as all other bishops are to the pope.

versy many and great, yet limited both for number and magnitude. For suppose king Henry the Eighth, after he had done what he could against the pope, should still have professed his good liking of Romish religion, opposing only this to all his popish clergy that had challenged him of revolt: "Am not I defender of the faith? The pope, whom I trow you take for no false prophet, hath given me this prerogative amongst Christian princes, as expressly as ever St. Peter bequeathed him his supremacy above other bishops. It is as impossible for me to defend, as for his holiness to teach, any other besides the true catholic faith. Let the proudest amongst my prelates examine my expositions of his decrees, and by St. George he shall fry a fagot for an heretic." Would this or the like pretence (though countenanced by royal authority) have been accepted for a just defence, that this boisterous king had not contradicted the pope, but the tattling monks, or other private expositors of his decrees? Would this have satisfied the pope's agents, until the king and his holiness had come to personal conference, for final debatement of the case? Yet for Christ's servants thus to neglect their Master's cause, is no sin in the Romanist's judgment, yea an heresy is it not to deal so negligently in it. For a sin of no lower rank they make it, not to
436 submit our hearts, minds, and affections unto the pope's negative decrees, though against that sense of scripture which conscience and experience give us. Unto all the doubts, fears, or scruples these can minister, it must suffice—that the pope saith he expounds scripture no otherwise than Christ would, were he in earth, but only controls all private glosses or expositors of them. But can any Christian heart content itself with such delusions, and defer all examinations of doctrine, until that dreadful day come upon him, wherein

the great Shepherd shall plead his own cause face to face with this pretended vicar and his associates? Do we believe that Christ hath given us a written law, that he shall come to be our judge, and call us to a strict account wherein we have transgressed or kept it; yet may we not try by examination, whether these Romish guides lead us aright or awry? whether some better or clearer exposition may not be hoped for, than the pope or council for the present tenders to us? What if the pope should prohibit all disputations about this point in hand; (whether obeying him against the true sense of scripture, (as we are persuaded,) we yield greater obedience unto him than unto scriptures;) may we not examine the equity of this decree, or his exposition of that scripture which haply he would pretend for this authority, *His amplius, fili mi, ne requiras*? No: by their general tenent, and Valentian'sⁱ express assertion, "it were extreme impiety to traverse this sense or exposition under pretence of obscurity," &c. By the same reason, for aught I can see, it would follow, that, if the question were, Whether, obeying the pope more than God, we did obey man more than God, we might not examine, at least not determine, whether the pope were man or God, or a middle nature betwixt both, which came not within the compass of that comparison.

CHAP. X.

In what sense the Jesuits may truly deny they believe the words of Man better than the words of God: in what Sense again our Writers truly charge them with this Blasphemy.

1. IF we review the former discourse, we may find that equivocation, which Bellarmine sought (as a knot

ⁱ Lib 2. cap. xvi. par. 8.

in a bulrush) in our writers' objections, to be directly contained in their church's denial of what was objected. Whilst they deny that they exalt the church's authority above scripture's, or man's word above God's, this denial may have a double sense. They may deny a plain and open profession or challenge of greater authority in their church than in scriptures; or they may deny, that in effect and substance they overthrow all authority of scripture, save only so far as it makes for their purpose.

Antichrist
must not be
a professed
or open
enemy, but
a secret un-
derminer of
true reli-
gion.

2. That the pope should openly profess himself competitor with God, or in express terms challenge greater authority than scriptures have, was never objected by any of our writers. For all of us know *the man of sin* must be no open or outward enemy to the church, but, Judas-like, a disciple by profession: his doctrine, indeed, must be a *doctrine of devils*, yet counterfeiting the voice of angels; as he himself, though by internal disposition of mind a slave to all manner of filthiness and impurity, must be instyled, *Sanctissimus Dominus*, "the most holy Lord." If the poison of his iniquity were not wrapt up in the titles of Divine mysteries, it would forthwith be disliked by many silly superstitious souls, which daily suck their bane from it, because persuaded that the scriptures (which they never have examined, whose true sense they never tasted, but from some relics of heathenish zeal idolatrously worship in gross) do fully warrant it. When our writers therefore object, that the papists exalt the pope's laws above God's, (had not these holy catholics an especial grace to grow deaf, as often as we charge their mother with such notorious and known whoredoms as they see might evidently be proved unto the world, if they should stand to contest with us,) their meaning is plain; that the pope, in deed and issue, makes the

scriptures (which in show he seems to reverence) of no authority, but only with reference to his own. That he and his followers should in words much magnify God's word, written or unwritten, we do not marvel; because the higher esteem men make of it, the higher still he may exalt his throne, being absolutely enabled, by this device, to make all that belongs to God, his word, his laws, his sacraments, the precious body and blood of his Son blessed for ever, mere footstools to his ambition. For if the authority of scriptures, or such traditions as he pretends, be established as Divine, and he admitted sole, absolute, infallible judge of their meaning, it would argue either Antichristian blindness not to see, or impudency of no meaner stock not to acknowledge, that the pope by this mean might appropriate unto himself the honour due unto God, and play upon his Creator in such sort, as if a corrupt lawyer having evidences committed to his trust, should by virtue of them take up rents and let leases, to the landlord's damage and tenant's overthrow. And (what is most villainous) unto whatsoever prerogatives, though most prejudicial to the Divine Majesty, his parasitical canonists shall blasphemously entitle this most holy father, the Son of God, and his faithfullest servants, (apostles or prophets,) must be brought forth to abet the forgery, as if evidence given in court by infamous knights of the post should in the final day of hearing be produced, under the hands and seals of free barons, or other chief peers of the land; for, as was intimated before, whatsoever the pope, though in his own cause, shall say, it must by this doctrine be supposed that Christ doth say the same. Yea, if it should please his holiness to avouch *ex cathedra* that these words, *Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*, are truly and literally meant of himself as Christ's

The pope and his followers have good reason to magnify Christ's authority in words or outward show, for their own gain and glory could not otherwise be so great.

vicar, or of perpetual succession in Peter's chair, the evidence must be taken as upon the Almighty's oath, who in that place hath sworn as much as these words import; but what that is, the pope must judge. That then he permits Christ the title of his Sovereign Lord, and urges others to subscribe unto his laws as most Divine, is just as if some politician should solicit the whole body of a kingdom solemnly to acknowledge one, otherwise lawful heir unto the crown, for their
 438 monarch most omnipotent and absolute, (whose will once signified must be a law for ever inviolable to all his subjects,) not with intent that he should in person retain such perpetual sovereignty over them, but that he might have absolute power to dispose of his kingdom as he pleased unto the world's end; or to nominate others, as absolute in his place, whilst he spent his days as a sojourner in a foreign land. Finally, not the most treacherous and detestable plot the most wicked pope that hath been, is, or shall be, could desire to effect, but may by this device be countenanced with as great and sacred authority as were the best actions our Saviour ever undertook; which (as may better appear from what shall be said in the next section^k) is to make every pope's authority as much greater than our Saviour's, as their lives and actions are worse than his was.

3. Suppose some devil should possess the pope's place in similitude of a man, (as some papists think the great Antichrist, who shall challenge as great authority as the pope doth, shall be a devil incarnate, or the son of a devil,) might he not hold his dignity by the same plea the Jesuits make for their lord and master? Could he not be content to pretend Christ's name or succession from St. Peter (as Simon Magus, might he

^k Chap. xx. 21.

The same plea the Jesuits make for the pope's absolute infallibility, the Devil himself might use with as great probability,

have obtained what he desired, would have done) for his own advantage? Could he not urge the authority of God's word, to confirm his own ^{formally elected in his place.} over it, and all that is called God's? If in such a case it might not be permitted men to examine his allegations out of scriptures, how could the Devil himself be convinced by scriptures, or deposed from his supremacy thence pretended? And can we doubt whether he which makes no other plea than the Devil, were he in place, might, is not that *filius Diaboli*, the great Antichrist? Were we not taught that the sons of this world are wise only in their own generation, we might justly wonder that any men endued with natural wit could be so blind, as at the first sight not to descry the politic sophisms used by the Romanist to cozen Christ of his kingdom. As their whole religion is but the image of the old Roman policy, so their main plot of *Templum Domini, templum Domini*, "The church, the church," as if all were rebels against Christ that will not swear absolute fealty to the church Romish, may be most fully paralleled by the like practice of such cunning statesmen, as having always one eye to the advancement of their own private fortunes, live under an absolute monarch, of himself royally minded, but not much intermeddling in the affairs of greatest moment. Opportunity of high place under a king, upon what occasion soever thus sequestered, that poor men's complaints cannot possess his ears, tempts politicians to effect their own purposes under pretence of his right, and to condemn all of treason or disloyalty that will not obey their designs directed in their sovereign's name, though most abhorrent from the disposition of his royal heart, were he acquainted with such lamentable grievances of his poor subjects, as are the usual consequents of princes' gracious favours upon great ones. The more absolute

such a prince's lawful authority, the greater his native subjects' love unto him is, the more may both be abused by such unthankful officers. As it is the sovereign conceit all men have of Christ's kingdom which keeps the silly in such servility unto the pope, his pretended agent.

- 439 4. This is the only difference in these two cases otherwise most like. An earthly prince may live and die deluded of his Machiavellian statesmen, over whom he hath no power after he himself is once subject. But Christ lives and reigns a king for ever, and though his throne be in the highest heavens, beholds the things done on earth. He sees, and yet suffereth his pretended officers to detain such as *love darkness more than light*, in grossest ignorance and blind subjection to the prince of darkness and his associates; he sees, and yet suffers them detain all such as delight in lies more than in truth from acquaintance with his Holy Spirit; he sees, and yet suffers their foulest villainies to be countenanced by his sacred laws; he sees, and yet suffers his holy name to be abused to the establishing of Antichristian heresies; he sees, and yet suffers his glory made a stale for maintenance of their secular pomp. He is the Keeper of Israel, and cannot so slumber as any abuse should escape his notice; his indignation shall not sleep for ever, but in due time he will rouse himself, as a lion awaked, to take vengeance upon all the workers of iniquity—on them above others, who have thus usurped his throne on earth, taking that judgment during the time of his supposed absence wholly into their hands, which belongs only unto him: *Even so, come, Lord Jesu, holy and true*, and with the breath of thy mouth destroy him that hath destroyed truth and sincerity from amongst the sons of men.

SECT. III.

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Containing the second Degree of great Antichrist's Exaltation, in making his Authority more absolutely infallible than any the visible or representative Church of the Jews, Moses, or the Prophets ever had : finally, in making it greater than Christ's or his Apostles' was.

THAT the church of Rome doth advance her decrees above the laws and ordinances of the Almighty, her words (that in this kind is called God's) above all Divine oracles, written and unwritten, is apparent out of their own positions hitherto discussed ; yet is this but the first degree of great Antichrist's exaltation.

The second is the exalting the pope's above any personal authority that ever was either practised or established on earth. This in brief is the assertion which (by God's assistance) we are in this present section to make evident ; The authority which the Jesuits and jesuited priests give, and would bind others upon pain of damnation to give, unto the present church or pope throughout every age, is greater than any authority that ever was challenged since the world began by any man or visible company of men, the man Christ Jesus not excepted.

This conclusion followeth immediately out of three positions, generally held and stiffly maintained by that church.

Romish positions whence the inconvenience proposed must be deduced.

The first, That the pope (live as he list) cannot err in matters of faith and manners when he speaketh *ex cathedra* ; that we are bound infallibly to believe whatsoever he so speaks, without examination of his doctrine by God's word, or evident external sign, or internal experiment of God's Spirit speaking in him.

The second, That we cannot assure ourselves the scriptures are the oracles of God, but by the infallible testimony of the visible church.

The third, That the true sense and meaning of scriptures in cases doubtful or controverted cannot be undoubtedly known without the infallible declaration of the same church.

What Restraint Precepts for Obedience unto the Priests of the Law (though seeming most universal for their form) did necessarily admit: and how universal Propositions of Scriptures are to be limited.

1. SEEING we undertake to prove, that no such authority as the Romish church doth challenge was ever established on earth, the answering of those arguments drawn from the authority of the priests in the Old Testament may to the judicious seem (at the first sight) needless; yet because such as they set the fairest glosses upon (if we look into the inside or substance) are fullest fraught with their own disgrace and ignominy, it will not be superfluous to acquaint the reader with some particulars, prefixing some general admonitions to the younger sort, for more commodious answering of all that can be brought of like kind.

2. Their commonplaces of cozening the world, especially smatterers of logic or school-learning, with counterfeit proofs of scripture, is either from some universal precept of obedience given to the people, or general promises of infallibility made to the priests in the Old Testament. Such as come unto the scriptures, having their mind dazzled with notions of *universale primum*, or other logic rules true in some cases, think the former precepts, being for their form universal, may ad-

mit no exception, limitation, or restraint, (otherwise the Holy Ghost might break the rule of logic,) whenas they admit many restraints, not always from one, but oftentimes from divers reasons; from these following especially. God sometimes enjoins obedience (as we say) in the abstract, to set us a pattern of such true accurate obedience as men should perform unto authority itself, or unto such governors as neither in their lives nor in the seat of judgment would decline either to the right hand or to the left, but square all their proceedings to the exact rule of God's word. Unto such governors continual and complete obedience was to be performed, because the parties governed upon examination should always find them jump with the law of God, unto which absolute obedience, as hath been shewed, is due. Nor doth the word of God, in setting out such exact obedience, lie open to that exception which politicians take against philosophers; as if it (as philosophers do) did give instructions only for happy men of Aristotle's making, or for the Stoic's wise men, who can nowhere be found but in Plato's commonwealth, whose metropolis is in the region of Eutopia. For the ancient Israel of God had this prerogative above all the nations of the earth, that their priests' lips, whilst they themselves were clothed with righteousness, and bare holiness unto the Lord in their breasts, should still preserve knowledge, and be able to manifest the will of God unto the people, not only by interpreting the general written law, but by revelations concerning particular facts of principal moment, as may be gathered from that law, ¹*Also thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; which shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear*

Obedience
may be
complete,
though not
absolute.

¹ Exod. xxviii. 30.

the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.

3. To omit the various interpretations and diverse opinions of this breastplate's use, why it was called the *breastplate of judgment*, Josephus^m and Suidas in my mind come nearest the truth. That the revelation by it was extraordinary, that God's presence, or juridical approbation of doubts proposed, was represented upon the precious stones that were set therein, is probable, partly from the aptness of it to allure the Israelites unto idolatry, partly from that formality which the Egyptiansⁿ, in imitation of the ephod's ancient use amongst the Jews, retained long after in de-

^m Joseph. lib. 3. c. 8. or 9.

ⁿ Ἐφόρει δ' οὗτος (ἀρχιδικαστῆς) περὶ τὸν τράχηλον ἐκ χρυσοῦς ἀλύσεως ἡρτεμένον ζώδιον τῶν πολυτελῶν λίθων, ὃ προσηγόρευον ἀληθείαν τῶν δ' ἀμφισβητήσεων ἤρχοντο ἐπειδὴν τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας εἰκόνα ὁ ἀρχιδικαστῆς προσθεῖτο. Diodorus Siculus, l. i. c. 3. And a little after: ἀμφοτέρων δὲ τῶν ἀντιδίκων τὰ γεγραμμένα δις τοῖς δικασταῖς δόντων, τὸ τηρικαῦτα ἔδει τοὺς μὲν τριάκοντα τὰς γνώμας ἐν ἀλλήλοις ἀποφαινέσθαι τὸν ἀρχιδικαστὴν δὲ τὸ ζώδιον τῆς ἀληθείας προστίθεσθαι τῇ ἐτέρᾳ τῶν ἀμφισβητήσεων. Suidas ex incerto quodam auctore hæc refert, (saith Fagius,) Ephod (inquit) nomen est Hebræum, quod si interpreteris, significat manifestationem aut redemptionem. (Vides autem eum auctorem ex quo Suidas hoc exscripsit, Hebrææ linguæ ignarum fuisse: ephod enim longe aliud significat. Fortassis pro ephod dicere voluit hoschen.) Erat autem forma ejus, textura palmaris, vario artificio instar pectoralis, ex aureis filis confecta. Ac in medio

habebat quasi stellam omnino auream. Ex utraque autem parte duos smaragdos, in quorum unoquoque sculpta erant sex nomina, videlicet, duodecim nomina tribuum Israel. Porro inter smaragdos continebat lapidem adamantem. Cum ergo sacerdos sciscitaturus erat de re quadam oraculum a Deo, ligabat ephod in superhumerali ad medium pectoris, et subiciebat manus suas sub ipsum, quas cum retraheret, deprehendebat eas quasi colore quodam infectas. Petebat autem a Deo responsum defixis in ephod oculis. Itaque si Deus annuebat ad id quod petebatur, confestim micabat lapis adamas. Si autem negabat, nihil ad pristinum et proprium lapidis fulgorem accedebat. Quod si Deus voluit populum subicere gladio, lapis reddebatur cruentus. Si autem imminebat mors, lapis fiebat niger. Fagius in cap. 28. Exod. [29.] ubi plura vide de Rationali. Vid. et Delrium, Disquisit. Magic. lib. 4. cap. 1. quæst. 2. sect. 1.

claration of the truth in judgment. For Diodorus tells us, that the ἀρχιδικαστῆς, or chief judge in that famous and venerable Egyptian high court, or parliament, did wear about his neck in a golden chain, *insigne*, a tablet *of precious stone*, or (if the reader be disposed to correct the translator) ζώδιον τῶν πολυτελῶν λίθων, which they called (as the Septuagint did Aaron's breastplate) ἀλήθεια, on which he steadfastly looked while matters were debating, (as Suidas saith the high priest did on his breastplate, whilst they asked counsel of God,) and whilst he gave sentence turned it unto the better cause, (exhibited, as the fashion was in that court, in writing,) in sign the truth itself did speak for it. That the Urim or Thummim were more than an emblem, yea an oracle of justice and right judgment, is apparent out of scripture: when Joshua was consecrated to be Israel's chief governor in Moses' stead, he was to stand before Eleazar^o the priest, ordained to *ask counsel for him by the judgment of Urim before the Lord*: so did Abiathar^p certify David of Saul's malicious resolution against him, and the lords of Keilah's treachery, if he should trust unto them. So again David is assured of victory *by the judgment of Urim and Thummim*^q, if he would follow the Amalekites that had burnt Ziklag.

4. Such priests as these were to be absolutely obeyed in answers thus given from the mouth of God. And it is most probable that the parties whom these answers did concern had perfect notice of the revelation made to the priests; howsoever, the truths of such answers being confirmed by experiment in those days, they were to undertake what the priests appointed, and to obey his advice at least by cautelous obedience, until

^o Num. xxvii. 21.^p 1 Sam. xxiii. 9.^q 1 Sam. xxx. 7, 8.

the event did prove the truth. But neither was this
 443 certain manifestation of God's will so absolutely pro-
 mised unto the priests, but, not living according unto
 the direction of God's law, he might fail in his oracles :
 nor was this people's prerogative above others without
 all limit ; that if they lived no better than others did,
 they should, as often as they asked counsel of God,
 infallibly know whether the answer were from him
 or no, albeit there were no defect in the priest. For
 this reason the Lord answered not Saul^r when he
 asked counsel of him, neither by dreams, nor by visions,
 nor by Urin, nor by the prophets, for Saul was now
 cast off by God, not willing to vouchsafe an answer
 unto his demands ; which argues, that the revelation
 made to the priests was also manifested to the party,
 solemnly and in sincerity of heart proposing the ques-
 tions whereof he desired to be resolved.

God's pro-
 mise unto
 the priest
 or people of
 Israel for
 their direc-
 tion by
 Urin and
 Thummin,
 or other-
 wise, was
 not abso-
 lute but
 conditional.

The priests'
 infallibility
 did depend
 upon their
 continency
 and inte-
 grity.

5. That the priest had no such privilege or absolute
 promise of God's infallible presence as the pope chal-
 lengeth, is apparent from the law of temperance pre-
 scribed : *And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying,*
Thou shalt not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor
thy sons with thee, when ye come into the tabernacle
of the congregation, lest ye die : this is an ordinance
for ever throughout your generations: that ye may put
difference between the holy and unholy, and between
the clean and unclean; and that ye may teach the
children of Israel all the statutes the Lord had com-
manded thee by the hand of Moses^s. If these priests
 themselves were unholy and unclean, they could not
 infallibly discern between the holy and unholy, between
 the clean and unclean : if they lived not according to
 this, they could not teach the children of Israel the
 rest of God's express laws, much less could they infal-

^r 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.

^s Levit. x. 8—11.

libly manifest unto them his will in all doubts and controversies. But the pope (so absolute is his prerogative which the Jesuits attribute unto him) must be thought to be infallibly assisted by the Holy Spirit, albeit he lead a most unhallowed, unclean, polluted life.

6. But for the promise made unto Levi and his seed, God himself by his prophet Malachi most expressly interprets the meaning of it: *And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you: if ye will not hear it, nor consider it in your heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and will curse your blessings: yea, and I have cursed them already, because ye do not consider it in your heart. Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and cast dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and you shall be like unto it. And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant which I made unto Levi might stand, saith the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave him fear, and he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and there was no iniquity found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many from iniquity. For the priest's lips shall preserve knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth^t.* As if he had said, Such priests I have had in former times, and such might your praises from my mouth and your estimation with men have been, had you framed your lives according to the rules which my servant Moses had set you. But were these priests, against whom he here speaks, infallible in their doctrine still, because God's promise was so ample unto Levi? If they were not, why doth

^t Malachi ii. 1—7.

444 Bellarmine bring this place to prove the pope's infallible authority in teaching Divine truths? If they were, why doth the Lord complain in the words immediately following:—*But ye are gone out of the way; ye have caused many to fall by the law; ye have broken the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I made you also to be despised and vile before all the people, because you keep not my ways, but have been partial in the law?*

7. This place alone (though many others might be brought) clearly evinceth God's promise unto Levi and his posterity, during the time of their priesthood, to have been conditional, not absolute. And as God's promise of infallibility was unto him and his seed, such was the obedience due to them and their authority not absolute, but conditional: and where the precepts may seem universal, yet are they to be limited oftentimes by the condition of the priest's life.

Universal propositions in scripture are to be limited by their proper subject, the end of the precept, or other circumstances.

8. But sundry propositions there be in scriptures for their form universal, which are also absolutely true in their proper subject, whose full extent or limits notwithstanding are not always evident. Whence many mistake in stretching them too far: others, seeing them fail in some particulars which seem comprehended under the universality of their form, suspect the absoluteness of their truth, and account them rather morally probable, or conditionally true, than necessary and certain; yet are they most absolutely necessary and certain, only their universality is to be limited by their proper subjects. This is a common difficulty in all arts, though less apparent in the mathematics or metaphysics, or other like abstract contemplative sciences. But in philosophy, as well natural as moral, many general rules there be most true and evident to such as know the nature or quality,

either of the subject or matter whereunto they are applied, or of these particulars whence the induction was gathered; and yet are obscure and doubtful unto others who mark the universality of their form, not so well acquainted with the nature of those subjects in which their truth is principally and most evidently seen, not so able to discern the identity or diversity, the proportion or disproportion which other subjects may have with the former; but of the trial of rules in arts (if God permit) elsewhere. I will now instance in scripture only; what proposition could be for the form more universal, what precept conceived in words more general, than that of sanctifying the sabbath? *In it thou shalt do no manner of work*^u, לא תעשה כל מלאכה

Non facies ullum opus. The Scribes and Pharisees putting a religion in the letter of the law, (as the Jesuits now do when it may make for their advantage,) did conclude from the generality of this precept, that our Saviour brake the sabbath when he healed the sick upon it: their pretences, if we respect the universality of the proposition only, were far more probable than the papist can pick any for their purpose; yet Jewish still, in that they considered not the end of the sabbath, which might have limited the universal form of the precept, and restrained it unto some kind of works only; for not all, but only all those works which were repugnant to the end of this precept were forbidden. The end of the sabbath was to sanctify themselves unto the Lord, to set forth his praise both in words and works. Such works then only are here forbidden as did distract the mind, or make men unapt to hear, read, or meditate on heavenly matters; all works of secular vocation or private consequence, which might hinder men's endeavours for procuring the health or

The precept concerning the sabbath, than which none can be more universal, did not extend to all manner of works.

^u Exod. xx. 10.

welfare of others ; not works of charity or present necessity, not works tending to greater public good, or to the avoidance of greater harms, which could not be prevented but by present working ; for men are to read, hear, and meditate upon God's word, that by it they may be fruitful in good deeds, by which God's name is more immediately glorified than only by speaking well and not doing so. Wherefore our Saviour Christ did better observe the sabbath by working upon it to save men's lives or recover their health, than the Pharisees did by abstaining from such works of mercy as might have glorified God's name more immediately than any speculative or precise rules how it should be kept ; yea, by not working these good works when fair occasion was offered, they did the works of Satan, even murder itself, as our Saviour Christ implies in that question proposed unto the Scribes and Pharisees which sought an accusation against him : *I will ask you a question ; Whether it is lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil ? to save life, or to destroy it* ^x ?

9. The like limitations this precept had in case of necessity, or for the avoidance of some great extraordinary calamity, not otherwise avoidable than by doing such works as upon ordinary and daily occasions were unlawful to be done upon the sabbath day. It was an opinion received (as it seems) amongst the Jews, that they might not fight, nor build the breaches or places whereby their enemies did hope for entrance, upon the sabbath. In this persuasion about the number of a thousand Jews did lay down their lives^y. But when Matthias heard of this his people and countrymen's massacre, (more general than it needed to have been, but for this their strict and precise interpretation

^x Luke vi. 9.

^y 1 Macc. ii. 36, &c.

of the former general commandment,) he and his friends wisely resolved, *Whosoever should come to make battle with us upon the sabbath day, we will fight against them; that we die not all, as our brethren that were murdered in the secret places*^z. Which they might have stopped, but would not, for fear of violating the sabbath. The reason of this their resolution (contained in the 40th verse) was most strong, drawn from the end of the sabbath; *For they said one to another, If we all do as our brethren have done, and fight not against the heathen for our lives, and for our laws, then shall they incontinently destroy us out of the earth*. And if the whole Jewish nation had been at that time utterly rooted out, who should either have sanctified God's sabbaths, or preserved his laws from the injury of times or fury of the heathen? Nature had taught the heathen that it was foolish *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas*; much more might religious discretion teach all men, how preposterous a course it were for the precise keeping of one to cross or overthrow the end of all sabbaths.

10. Yet our adversaries, I am sure, cannot bring any precept so peremptory or general for absolute obedience unto the high priests and governors, as the former was for not working upon the sabbath. And yet this we see hath its restraint from the end, and holds only absolutely true in certain kind of works, not in all. The like restraint, either from the end or from the circumstances, may all those places likewise suffer, which seem to be most general for absolute obe- 446
dience unto God's messengers or spiritual governors.

11. The end of obeying God's messengers is, that men thereby may obey God himself. Suppose then God had said, Thou shalt obey the priest in all things Universal precepts for obeying God's messengers

^z 1 Macc. ii. 41.

must be
limited by
the end of
obedience.

whatsoever he shall command thee, a wise man, notwithstanding all this, would thus resolve ; Suppose the priest command me to do that, in doing which I shall disobey God, or to omit that continually, in performing of which I should obey God ; am I bound to obey him in all such commands ? so should I frustrate the end of the law, and commit the same offence by this my blind obedience, which others do by presumptuous and wilful disobedience unto spiritual governors. But it will be replied, Who shall judge whether the spiritual governor command thee such service as argues disobedience unto God, or no ? If the case be doubtful, and I be commanded by my lawful pastor, I have answered already in what sense obedience must be performed : but if the case be evident, men must openly disobey their pastors, before they certainly disobey God. But who shall judge of the evidence ? Every man's conscience. Shall that then be evident which every man shall say is evident unto him ? No ; but what in deed and conscience is, and so shall appear in his judgment that searcheth the heart and reins. Such as do not fear his censure will make no conscience of disobeying men pretending authority from him : such as with fear and trembling expect the Son of man's appearance, will not much esteem how they be judged by men, further than in reason they may be persuaded their sentence shall be ratified in the last day of judgment. And because God hath endued spiritual governors with power of retaining and remitting sins, every one that fears him which gave will fear to disobey them to whom this power is given ; lest if they retain, he will not remit ; and retain they justly may, or rather must, the sins of all such as *add thirst to drunkenness*, contempt of God's messengers' summons to repentance unto actual breaches of his law. This

is as open rebellion upon a riot, perhaps first attempted upon ignorance of the law, inconsiderateness, or foolish passion, but continued after proclamation made in the king's name, by a public magistrate authorized for such purposes: the parties admonished upon such high terms to desist from any suspicious enterprise, (though no more,) must be certain of the prince's or chief law-giver's future approbation of what they go about if they persist, otherwise disobedience to a lawful magistrate or inferior officers will be found rebellion against the state or sovereignty.

12. Though it be most true what hath been before delivered, that unto pastors conditional obedience is only due, yet is not the condition precedent to all acts of obedience, but subsequent, at least to some, and to be inserted by way of limitation or caution, for desisting upon discovery of further danger, rather than interposed as a stop to breed delay, or prohibition of all obedience, until evident proof be made that it is expressly due in the particulars enjoined. The want of this distinction between a condition precedent, and a condition subsequent or annexed unto actual obedience, hath been the original (I am persuaded) as well of the papists' error in demanding absolute obedience without all condition or limitation, as of many protestants' granting less than is due to pastors, that is, obedience only upon this condition—if they shew express warrant of scriptures for the particulars enjoined. Nor is the condition between the pastor and his flock like unto that between man and man in legal contracts, or in controversies of debt, wherein all are equal, and nothing due unto the plaintiff before the performance of the condition be proved: but such as is between a private man and a magistrate, (both subordinate in their several places to one sovereign,) unto whom only

Conditional
obedience
of two sorts.

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In what
acts abso-
lute obe-
dience is
due to
pastors.

absolute and complete obedience is due, though unto his officers some obedience is absolutely due, at the least to be *dicto audiens*, to hear him with patience, reverence, and attention, not to contradict or neglect his commands, but upon such evident reasons as the inferior party dare adventure to try the cause instantly with him before the supreme judge. The acts of obedience which are absolutely due from the flock to spiritual magistrates, or Christ's messengers, and precedent to the condition interposed or inserted, are the impartial examinations of their own hearts and consciences, the full renouncing of all worldly desires, earthly pleasure, carnal lusts or concupiscences, because these unrenounced have a command over our souls, and detain them from performing service best acceptable unto God, or yielding that sincere obedience which is absolutely due unto his sacred word. For this end and purpose the flock stand absolutely bound to enter into their own hearts and souls, to make diligent search and strict inquiry what rebellious affection or unruly desire is harboured there, as often as their overseers shall in Christ's name charge them so to do; otherwise their neglect or contempt will be in that dreadful day a witness of their rebellion in this life, a bar to keep sin in, and shut grace out.

13. But if any man, out of the sincerity of a good conscience and steadfast resolution of a faithful heart, (which hath habitually renounced the world, flesh, and Devil, that it may be always ready to serve Christ,) shall refuse his pastor's commandment, though threatening hell-pains to his disobedience in some particulars, he doth yet better observe the former precept by this his denial, than others do by performance of absolute blind obedience without strict impartial examination of their consciences, for he doth herein obey

God, whom to obey with heart and mind thus freed from the dominion of Satan and the world, is the very end and scope, the final service, whereunto all performance of obedience unto spiritual governors is but as a training of Christ's faithful soldiers. And in these acts of obedience is that saying of our Saviour most generally and absolutely true; *He that heareth you heareth me; he that despiseth you despiseth me*^a. That precept of denying ourselves and renouncing all, is the foundation of all the rest concerning obedience; without performance of this, neither can our undertaking any other acts be sincere, nor our refusal (lawfully admonished) safe; our best obedience, not hereon grounded, is non-christian, our disobedience unchristian and rebellious. For which cause we are absolutely bound unto habitual performance of this, ere we can be admitted as lawful auditors of Christ's other precepts. All other our resolutions or deliberate intendments, whether for performance of any action commended for good and honest, or for maintaining any doctrine proposed by lawful pastors for true and orthodoxal, must be limited by their proportion or dis- 448 proportion to the end of obedience enjoined unto spiritual commanders, which, as we said before, was to obey God in all. Those acts then must be undertaken, which upon examination appear not prejudicial to that oath of absolute obedience which we have taken unto our supreme Lord: these omitted, which out of this general resolution of renouncing all and denying ourselves, and this impartial examination of our souls in particular doubts, may seem to derogate from that absolute loyalty which we owe to Christ. No minister may expect obedience but upon these conditions; and he that sincerely obeyeth in the forementioned funda-

^a Luke x. 16.

mental act of renouncing all and denying himself, and yet disobeys in other particulars upon such grounds and motives as we have said, doth perfectly fulfil that precept, (if any such there were,) "Obey your spiritual overseers in all things."

14. Be our bond of duty to such governors, whether by ordinary subjection to their calling, or voluntary submission of our judgments to their personal worth, never so great; yet seeing they command only in Christ's name and for the advancement of his kingdom, to imagine spiritual obedience should be due to such injunctions as upon sober and deliberate examination seem to cross the end they propose, would argue such spiritual madness, as if a man should adventure to kill, (by all probability of present occurrence, his father or mother,) because he had formerly vowed (without consideration of any homicide, much less parricide, thence likely to follow) to kill the first live creature he met. "In such a case," as Philo acutely observes^b, "a man should not forswear himself, or break his vow, yet overthrow the very end and use of all vows, which were instituted as bridles to make us refrain all occasions or provocations to evil, not as halters to lead or draw us to such unnatural villainies."

15. These rules hitherto mentioned rightly observed, there is no greater difficulty in restraining universal precepts of obedience to the church, than in limiting general commandments of kings to their deputies or vicegerents. Now, if a king should charge his subjects to obey his lieutenant in all that he should command, any reasonable man would take the meaning to be this—That he should be obeyed in all things that belong unto the king's service, because this is the end of his appointment, and the proper subject of this pre-

^b Philo de specialibus legibus.

cept. No man in this case would be so mad as to take the prince's word for his warrant, if by his lieutenant he should be put upon some service which were more than suspicious to be traitorous, or apparently tending to the king's destruction. If a Jesuit should see the pope's agent or nuncio (whom he were bound to obey by the pope's injunction delivered in most ample terms) tampering with the pope's open enemies; either consorting with us in our Liturgy, or communicating with us in our sacraments, receiving pension from foreigners, or secretly conferring with such of their counselors as had more wit than himself; could he dispense with his oath of absolute allegiance to the pope upon these or like evasions: This is suspicious indeed; but how shall I know whether the pope's agent in doing this do disobey his holiness? If he say no, must I not believe him? must I not obey him, and do as he doth, whom the pope commands me to obey in all things? The Jesuits are not so simple in the pope's 449 cause as they would make all other in God's: they could tell how to limit such commands, though delivered in most universal and ample terms. This is the matter, then, which so vexeth their devout hearts, and sets them besides themselves with furious zeal in this argument; that any Christian should be as wary and circumspect, lest he should prove disloyal unto the Creator and Redeemer of mankind, as they are, lest they should disobey the advancer and supporter of their order.

16. But to come nearer the point, and instance in some precepts of obedience delivered in most general form; might the literal or logic note of universality carry away such absolute sovereignty as they contend for: far greater reason there is, why every father or master should be an absolute pope over his own family,

Precepts of obedience unto masters or parents, though most universal for their form, are limited

by their
subject.
Vide Bel-
lar. l. 2. de
Monac.
cap. 21.

than why the pope of Rome should be a father of all Christian congregations, an absolute judge of scripture or master over men's faith. St. Paul, Col. iii. 20, commands *children to obey their fathers in all things, for that is well pleasing unto the Lord*; which is as much as if he had said, In obeying them you obey the Lord. Again, he commands *servants to be obedient unto them that are their masters according to the flesh in all things, not with eyeservice as menpleasers; but with singleness of heart, fearing God*. Both these precepts are conceived in terms as general as any precept for obedience to spiritual governors. In the precept concerning wives' obedience to their husbands, the note of universality is omitted: for he saith, *Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as it is comely in the Lord*; not in all things. Had the apostle made any mention of obedience unto spiritual governors, or were there any hope to comprehend pastors under the name of fathers or masters, it would quickly be inferred, the note of universality was purposely added by our apostle in these latter precepts, that men might know absolute obedience, without limitation or examination, was due unto the pope.

17. But the holy men of God, (whose mouths always spake out of the abundance of their hearts, as the Spirit gave them utterance, and were not curious to cast their words in such exact scholastic moulds as men addicted to artificial meditations having their brains more exercised than their hearts in God's word, usually do,) even where they seem to speak most universally for the form, are to be universally understood only in that subject or matter which for the present they mind most. As when our apostle commands servants and children to obey, the one their masters, the other their parents, in all things; the

meaning is as if he had said, Ye that are Christian servants, be ye most willing to yield all obedience that is due unto masters; ye that are Christian children, to yield all obedience unto your parents which is convenient for any children to yield to theirs^c: so that the universal note doth rather enjoin a totality of heartiness and cheerfulness, a perfection of sincerity, in performing that obedience which other children ought to their fathers, or servants to their masters, than any way extend the object of Christian children's or servants' obedience to more particulars than others were bound unto, at the least he doth not extend the object of 450 their obedience to any particulars which might prejudice the sincerity of their obedience due unto other commanders; whilst he enjoineth servants to *obey their masters in all things*, he reserves their allegiance entire unto princes and higher powers; such must be obeyed both by masters and servants, by fathers and sons. Much more doth God, when he enjoins obedience in most ample form unto kings or spiritual governors, reserve obedience due to himself most entire and absolute.

18. Yet entire and absolute it cannot be, unless it depend immediately and absolutely upon his laws; unless it be exempt from the uncontrollable disposal or infallible direction of other authorities. Nor can Christ be said our supreme Lord, unless our obedience to him and those laws which he hath left us, do limit and

That universal absolute obedience unto men is incompatible with true loyalty unto Christ.

^c So Aquinas expounds it as Bellarmine acknowledgeth it: Quod vero B. Paulus ait Col. 3. Filii obedite parentibus per omnia, vel ita intelligi debet, ut illud (per omnia) significat per omnia, ad quæ se extendit patria potestas, ut recte docet Sanct. Thom. in 2. quæst. 104. ar. 5. quemad-

modum, si quis diceret, oportere milites obedire imperatori *per omnia*, exponendum esset per omnia, quæ ad militiam pertinent, vel certe tenentur filii per omnia parentibus obedire, sed dum parvuli sunt.—Bellarm. l. 2. de Monach. c. 21.

restrain all other obedience due unto any authority derived from him and his laws, more than a prince could be said to be that servant's supreme lord or sovereign, which were bound absolutely to obey his master in all points, without examination whether his designments were not contrary to the public laws and statutes of his prince and country. Wherefore, as the oath of allegiance unto princes doth restrain the former precepts, *Servants, obey your masters in all things*, that is, in all things that are not repugnant to public laws, nor prejudicial to the crown and dignity of your sovereign; so must that solemn vow of fidelity made unto Christ in baptism, and our daily acknowledgement of him for our sovereign Lord, restrain all precepts enjoining performance of obedience to any power on earth, and set these immovable bounds and limits to them; Obey thy king and governor in all things, that is, in all things that are not repugnant to the laws and ordinances of the great king, thy supreme lord and governor. Whilst thou obeyest him, thou dost well in disobeying them, as well as that servant that takes arms against his master in the king's defence; whilst thou disobeyest him, all other obedience is rebellion; *Ye are bought with a price*, (saith our apostle,) *be not ye the servants of men*; service according to the flesh he elsewhere approves, he strictly enjoins: for that is freedom in respect of this servitude of mind and conscience, in being wholly at any other man's disposition.

19. Nor is it more difficult for Christ's servants to discern when governors solicit them to disloyalty against him, than for servants according to the flesh to know when their masters seduce them unto rebellion, so Christian men would fear God as much as natural men do earthly princes. Such as fear God

are sure of a better expositor of his laws for fundamental points than servants can have for their princes'. The transgression of both are easy to discern in the beginning of revolts or apostasies; but the latter more difficult, when traitors or usurpers are grown strong, and can pretend fair titles unto sovereignties, or coin false pedigrees; yet it is not impossible for sober and observant spirits in such a case to foresee what party to follow; unto such the signs of the time, and carriage of the several causes, will bewray who have the true title. But this difficulty is none in our spiritual obedience challenged by the church of Rome; for that church in words confesseth Christ to be the true King and supreme Lord, no usurper; which is as much as 451 to say, the pope is an usurper, and a rebel, that dares in deeds and substance challenge the sovereignty from him, (as you heard in the former dispute,) by making claim to this unlimited, unreserved obedience. Upon what grounds especially we are now to examine, by these rules hitherto discussed.

CHAP. XII.

The Authority of the Sanhedrim not so universal or absolute amongst the Jews as the Papists make it, but was to be limited by the former Rules.

1. ONE especial place on which they stand is from that law in Deuteronomy^d, *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, between plague and plague, in the matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and go up unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the priests of the Levites, and to the judge that shall be in those days, and ask; and they shall shew thee the*

^d Deut. xvii. 8, &c.

sentence of judgment : and thou shalt do according to that thing which they of that place (which the Lord hath chosen) shew thee ; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee : according to the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, shalt thou do : thou shalt not decline from the thing which they shall shew thee, neither to the right hand, nor to the left. And that man that will do presumptuously, not hearkening unto the priest, (that standeth before the Lord thy God to minister there,) or unto the judge, that man shall die : and thou shalt take away evil from Israel. So all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

2. This precept admits of many restrictions, any one of which doth take away all the force of our adversaries' objections ; first, it may (without prejudice to our cause) be granted, although it cannot out of these words be necessarily inferred, that God here prescribes obedience in the abstract, such as was to be performed unto those priests and judges that lived, according to that pattern which he had set them. Thus may this precept of obedience for the extent be universal, and concern all causes whatsoever, spiritual or temporal ; doubts of conscience or matters of this life ; in all which such governors were to be obeyed, but conditionally [if they were such as God in his law required they should be] unto such (as you heard before) he gave illuminations extraordinary, such as the parties that were to obey might have perfect notice of. But how great soever the extent of this precept be, not one syllable in it makes more for absolute obedience unto spiritual than unto civil governors ; for it is said indefinitely, ver. 10, *Thou shalt do according to that thing which they* (either spiritual or temporal)

of that place which the Lord hath chosen shall shew thee. And again, the words are disjunctive, *That man that will do presumptuously, not hearkening unto the priest or unto the judge, that man shall die* ; whether the priest were to be supreme judge or no, it is not said, at the least the high priest was not the chief man ⁴⁵² always in the council, for he was not always admitted into the supreme consistory or Sanhedrim, which is established in this place; yet Bellarmine^e will have the definitive sentence belong unto the priest, and the execution of it to the civil magistrate: so indeed the present Romish church in spiritual cases would be judge, and make Christian princes her hangmen, but their practice must not be taken for an infallible exposition of that law^f, whence they seek to justify their practice quite contrary to the practice of the Jewish church and synagogue. Nor doth Bellarmine or any other, beside the base parasitical canonists, or the pope's trencher-chaplains, deny, but that in many civil causes the prince or temporal magistrate hath a definitive sentence; can he then gather out of any circumstance of this place, that only spiritual causes are here meant?

^e Objicit Brentius, hoc loco non solum ad sacerdotem, sed ad judicem etiam remitti eos, qui dubitant, judicem autem fuisse politicum principem. Respondeo, nomine judicis posse hic intelligi principem sacerdotum, nam in Hebræo est: *Ascende ad sacerdotes, et ad judicem*: quasi diceret, ad concilium sacerdotum, et eorum principem, summum sacerdotem. Dico secundo, si intelligamus nomine judicis politicum principem, tam esse distincta officia. Nam sacerdoti tribuitur sententia definitiva, judici autem exe-

cutio in contumaces: *Qui superbierit, inquit, nolens obedire sacerdotis imperio, ex decreto judicis moriatur.*—Bellar. de Verb. Dei Interpret. l. 3. c. 4. This distinction is quite contrary to the words of the text; for the Hebrews call such as execute sentence שוטרים, in opposition of the word שופטים, used in this place, which signifieth such a magistrate as giveth definitive sentence. Vid. Fagium in xvi. Deut. [xviii.]

^f The law of God, Deut. xvii. did concern temporal causes, either only or especially.

may, he confesseth that the law is general concerning all doubts that might arise out of the law, yet it is most probable that it only concerns civil controversies; and Bellarmine's reason to prove that it includeth spiritual causes or matters of religion, is most idle. The occasion of this law (saith he) was for them that did serve other gods, as appears out of the beginning of the chapter; now the service of other gods is a point of religion. But what though Moses in the former part of this chapter speak of idolaters, must this law therefore concern idolaters? In the former part he speaketh only of idolaters, but this law is not only for them by Bellarmine's confession. Yea, the circumstances of the place, and the express law against idolaters mentioned before, evince, that in this chapter as in the former, he first sets down laws concerning the true service of God, and in the latter part gives precepts for the observation of the second table, the maintaining of love, by the final composition of all controversies that might arise betwixt neighbours. In the former law idolaters are sentenced to death, and idolatry (saith Bellarmine) is a point of religion; was the priest alone then to give sentence, and the civil magistrate only to execute it? There is not the least pretence for it out of this text. Any ordinary magistrate might execute him that was lawfully convicted of this crime, nor was it so hard a matter to judge who was an idolater amongst the Jews, as it is to determine what is a heresy amongst the Romanists. This was to be proved by witnesses, not by logical proof or force of speculative reason: had the cunningest Jesuit in the world been taken amongst them kneeling down before an image, and praying to it, all the distinctions in the Master of Sentences or Aquinas, or both their commentators, could not have redeemed him against

two honest men that had sworn he had done thus much; there had been no appeal from any city in Judah unto any higher court; his doom had been read in the gates, and without them he should (as Homer speaks) have put on a stony coat.

3. That the kings of Judah were only to execute the 453 priests' definitive sentence in all hard controversies, is a position well deserving execution without appeal at princes' hands. And no doubt but it did so amongst the Jews. The former court, as is most probable, was to cease when they had a king amongst them. And Moses in the former chapter, after he had given the other law for ending controversies, gives the law for the election of their king, if so be they would have one; as if the former court had then ceased to be the supreme tribunal, seeing all subjects might appeal unto the king from it, in which this sovereignty did before reside, as being the supreme tribunal, whence there could be no appeal.

4. The king, in the law concerning his qualification, is commanded to have *the Law of his God written out. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and to keep all the words of his law and these ordinances, for to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not from the commandment, to the right hand or to the left*^g. Was he to take all this pains, only that he might learn to execute the priests' indefinite sentence? This any heathen might have done. But the kings of Israel, albeit they were not to meddle in the execution of the priests' office, were notwithstanding to be so well skilled in scriptures as to be able to judge whether the priest did according to that law which

^g Deut. xvii. 18, &c.

God had set him to follow, and to control his definitive sentence, if it were evidently contrary to God's word, which both were absolutely bound to obey.

5. It may perhaps here be objected, that the king had no such assurance of infallibility in judgment as the priest had, and therefore it was requisite he should rely upon the priests' definitive sentence. What construction then can any Jesuit make of these words, *A divine sentence shall be in the lips of the king: his mouth shall not transgress*^h? he saith not, in execution of judgment given by the priests, but *in judgment* given by himself, seeing *it is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness, for the throne is established by justice*. And again, *Righteous lips* (such as the priests' should and might have been, but usually were not) *are the delight of kings; and the king loveth him that speaketh right things*. This place, if we respect either the abstract form of precept or plenitude of God's promise for abiliment to perform it, is more plain and peremptory for the kings' than any can be brought for the high priests' infallibility, in giving definitive sentence; yet doth it not necessarily infer, kings shall not, but rather shews that they should not, or that they might not at any time err in judgment, so they would steadfastly follow those rules which God hath prescribed them. For when God saith, *A divine sentence shall be in the lips of kings*, this speech doth no more argue a perpetual certainty in giving righteous sentence, than if he had said, A corrupt or erroneous sentence shall not be in the lips of the king, or his mouth shall not transgress in judgment. For as that which God saith shall not be done oftentimes is done, so may that which God saith shall be done be oftentimes left undone. Who is he then would make this collec-

That the infallibility of kings may be defended with as great probability of scriptures as the infallibility of priests, Prov xvi. 13.

^h Prov. xvi. 10.

tion ; God saith, *Thou shalt not steal* ; that is, no man shall steal ; *ergo*, there can be no thieves, no theft committed : yet is our adversaries' collection as foolish ; *The priests' lips shall preserve knowledge* ; *ergo*, they 454 cannot err in giving definitive sentence ; as again, *The Spirit shall lead you into all truth—They shall be all taught of God* ; therefore the church shall be infallibly taught by the Spirit, and shall as infallibly teach others, live they as they list.

6. These places shew what should be done, and what God for his part will infallibly perform, (so men would be obedient to his word,) but neither do these, or any of like nature, include any infallibility of not erring without performance of due obedience in practice of life ; nor do they necessarily conclude that men always shall perform such obedience. The most which they infer is this, That governors by duty are bound to perform, that performing such obedience in practice of life, they might be freer from error in their doctrine or definitive sentence. And it was abstinence and integrity of life that was to preserve sincerity of judgment in princes' as well as priests' lips ; for which reason princes had their precepts of temperance, answerable to those rules prescribed for the priests. So Solomon teacheth kings : *Give not thy strength unto a woman, nor thy ways : this is to destroy kings. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine ; nor for princes strong drink : lest he drink, and forget the decree, and change the judgment of all the children of affliction*ⁱ. This place evidently shews, that if their princes were of riotous or intemperate lives, they had no promise that they should not pervert the judgment of the children of affliction. The conclusion hence arising is, All the places that can be

ⁱ Prov. xxxi. 3—5.

brought either for the king or priests' authority, rather shew what manner of men they should be both in life and judgment, than assure them of any infallibility of judgment if they be dissolute in life. This was a point never dreamt of by any, before the popes' notoriously infamous lives did discredit the titles of sanctity and infallibility, (which from a conceit of their predecessors' integrity they have usurped,) and enforced their parasites to frame a distinction of sanctity in doctrine separated from sanctity in life.

7. It is questionable whether both priests and princes of Judah had not an extraordinary privilege above all other nations, both for being infallible in their definitive sentences whilst they lived according to the laws which God had given them, and also for their more than ordinary possibility of living according to such laws. God's blessing (as is most probable) in both these respects were extraordinary unto their princes and priests; yet not so infinitely extraordinary, that either of them might without presumptuous blasphemy hope for ordinary integrity, (such as the more civil sort of heathens had,) much less for any absolute infallibility, if they were extraordinarily wicked in their lives, or unfaithful in their other dealings. Even the people's wickedness did impair the force and virtue of these extraordinary blessings promised to their kings and priests; God gave them priests as well as princes in his anger, such as should be pliable to their humour, not such as should infallibly direct them against the suggestions of the world and flesh for their spiritual good: so that these gracious promises both for their spiritual and temporal governors' sincerity in judgment, did depend in part upon the condition of this people's life.

455 8. The usual proverb was most true, (though the

words thus inverted,) "Like people, like priests." Thus did the wise son of Sirach interpret God's promises both to priest and princes, *Because Phineas the son of Eleazar had zeal in the fear of the Lord, and stood up with good courage of heart when the people were turned back, and made reconciliation for Israel. Therefore was there a covenant of peace made with him, that he should be the chief of the sanctuary and of his people, and that he and his posterity should have the dignity of the priesthood for ever: and according unto the covenant made with David, that the inheritance of the kingdom should remain to his son of the tribe of Judah, so the heritage of Aaron should be to the only son of his son, and to his seed. God give us wisdom in our heart to judge his people in righteousness, that the good things that they have be not abolished, and that their glory may endure for their posterity^k.*

9. From what we have said it is most evident, that the precepts enjoining obedience unto civil magistrates are as large and ample as any can be found for obedience unto spiritual governors; and what limitations soever the one did, the other might admit, during the time of the law. The promises of God's extraordinary favour, for directing both in their proceedings, were equal to both, always conditional in both cases.

10. As for this law, Deut. xvii., the very nature of the text, and circumstances annexed thereto, infer no more than this; that God would have a supreme tribunal amongst the Israelites, wherein all controversies, which could not be ended in inferior courts, were to be finally determined, lest private contentions might grow to public dissensions; or wranglings for petty damages turn to the overthrow of the state by disturbance of

This law of Deut. doth justify our English laws for executing priests and Jesuits, or all such as acknowledge the pope supreme

^k Ecclus. xlv. 23, &c.

judge in
causes ec-
clesiastical.

common peace. It may be admitted then that absolute obedience is here enjoined, but not universally absolute, nor in all causes, but in causes of controversy betwixt man and man, not in causes betwixt men and their own consciences. And although the ground of contro- versers' plea might be from some spiritual law, (as con- cerning succession in the priesthood, &c.) or have some spiritual matters annexed as consequent, the judge's censure was to extend only unto men's civil carriage in such controversies, and the plaintiffs were to prose- cute their right or title (were it matter of wrong, of inheritance, spiritual or temporal) no farther than the sentence of his court did permit. All were bound upon pain of death to sit down with their private loss, ra- ther than raise tumults, or endanger the public form of government established in Israel. Even when they knew the judge's sentence in particular to be erroneous, they were to do or suffer as he commanded, to remit their right, to let go that hold and interest which they thought they had in matters of temporal consequence, (though perhaps of spiritual title,) and undergo what corporal penalty soever the priest or judge (whether- soever were supreme magistrates) did enjoin them; but they were not bound to think as the priest or judge thought, nor to hold their sentence was always agree- able to the law of God. Albeit much easier it was for the Sanhedrim than for the modern Romish consis- tory, to resolve more controversies brought unto them by this Divine rule. Because the ancient Israelites did not use to trouble their priests or judges with such quirks and quiddities, as, coined for the most part by schoolmen, have bred greatest contention in the Christ-
456ian world, such as never could have been decided by the judgment of Urim or Thummim, nor by prophets, visions, or dreams: he that had desired any such,

must have gone to Endor for resolution. In Jerusalem or Shiloh (whiles they flourished) the proposers of such controversies should have been punished for their curiosity, which amongst the Israelites had been as hateful as the sin of witchcraft. The want of such a tribunal as this, for punishing contentions and curious spirits, hath caused such fruitless contentions and nice questions, as cannot possibly be resolved, once set abroad or prosecuted, but might easily have been prevented by the religious care and industry of such a supreme consistory in every kingdom.

11. What hath been said concerning the meaning of this place, Deut. xvii., is confirmed by the practice of the Jews and their ancient records: first, that not only conditional, but absolute obedience is here enjoined, is not probable out of those words¹, ver. 11, *according to the law which they shall teach thee*; not only the written law of God, (as some will have it,) but such customs as were received in this court, though but probably deduced from the written law, or otherwise invented by their magistrates in cases omitted by the law-giver. All such customs, decrees, or ordinances were to be obeyed absolutely in such matters as did concern

¹ Tria genera doctrinarum et sententiarum veteribus fuerunt. Primum receptum credebatur a Mose ac prophetis, quod Cabala nominatur. Secundum, quod opinionatione judicum constitit, ut in scripturæ locis enarrandis, quæ ad œconomiam pertinebant. Ex quo intelligitur causa, quam ob rem sub priore templo et prioribus annis posterioris, tanta concordia Judæorum ecclesia administrata sit; donec enim magnum judicium viguit, omnia certo definita, summo consensu recipiebantur. Deinde in sententia fe-

randa, et respondendo de lege sæpissime conjecturis connixi sunt, Et tamen quod sic erat pronunciatum, pro lege recipiebatur. Tertium genus, quod statuunt ultra legem, quo illa defenditur, seu objecto sepimento, ut prius violandum sit hoc, quam in legem aliquid foris admittatur. Hoc Christi domini ætate inverterunt, *Nam propter traditiones reliquerunt legem Dei.* Hujusmodi interim duo genera, alia perpetua esse voluerunt, alia temporaria. Fagius in Deut. xvii. [9.]

men's temporal losses or commodities; there was not appeal to any other court on earth, for the reversing of any sentence given in this; to have attempted thus much by this law had been present death; and by the same all Christian princes justly might, yea ought to put to death all such, as in any cause spiritual or temporal, upon any occasion whatsoever, shall appeal to Rome from the chief tribunal allotted for the hearing of such causes in their native country: for by nature and Christian duty, all are bound to abide the sentence of that tribunal; though not to approve it, yet not to resist it, or oppose violence unto it, though it offer violence to them: for God only must take vengeance of their abusing of that authority, which he had given them for others' good, not for their harm. Would God all Christian princes would put this law in practice, and fulfil God's word in the forementioned place, that all might die which do thus presumptuously; that so evil, and (the mischief of mischiefs) all appeals to Rome might be taken away from Israel; that so all Christian people hereafter might hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

12. Secondly, that the high priest was not the infallible judge, nor above kings in giving definitive sentence, is most evidently confirmed by consent of Jewish antiquity^m; for the high priest was not admitted into their chief consistory but upon this condition, if he were a wise man; and being admitted, yet was he not to sway all as he pleased, for so is it said in the same place, that the king was not to be of the Sanhedrim, because they were forbidden to contend with him, with the

^m Sed nec rex in Sanhedrim
admittebatur, eo quod prohibi-
tum sit contendere cum eo. Sa-
cerdos vero magnus recipiebatur
modo sapientia præditus esset.
Fagius in cap. xvi. [18.] Deut.
ex Hebræis.

high priest they might. But the prophets of God did always in their doctrine withstand either the priests, prophets, kings, or judges, as often as they went *contra stationes montis Sinai*ⁿ; i. e. “against the stations (or statutes) of mount Sinai.”

CHAP. XIII.

457

That our Saviour's Injunction of Obedience to the Scribes and Pharisees, though most universal for the Form, is to be limited by the former Rules. That without open Blasphemy it cannot be extended to countenance the Romish Cause: that by it we may limit other places brought by them for the Pope's transcendent universal Authority.

ANOTHER place there is, which, as it seems, hath been too much beaten heretofore, because some of the cunningest anglers for Peter's tribute begin of late to relinquish it. The place is Matt. xxiii. 2, 3; *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but after their works do not: for they say, and do not.* Bellarmine in his first attempts is more forward to fortify this hold than any other; to what purpose I cannot divine, unless to terrify such as view it only afar off; but it seems he felt upon better experience, the maintenance of it, once closely besieged, would not quit the cost; for elsewhere he yields as much expressly as will enforce him to surrender up this, if it be instantly demanded. Perhaps he hoped his premunitions might work some secret disposition in most men's minds more prejudicial to our cause than we out of our honest simplicity could at first sight suspect. It will not therefore be amiss, partly to prevent the possible danger of his concealed conclusion,

ⁿ Vide Fagium in cap. xvi. Deut. and the annotations on the 10th section of the next chapter.

by shewing the express folly of his premises; partly, to examine the place itself, because the evidence of it failing will be a presumption against all they pretend of like kind, and may afford some further light how we may restrain propositions for their form most universal, by the matter or circumstances concomitant.

2. The fortresses which he erects for defence are three. His first, that our Saviour in this very chapter^o wherein he reprehends the Scribes and Pharisees most sharply, yet gives this caveat to such as are weak in faith, lest they should neglect their doctrine for their bad lives and hypocrisy. The note, considered in itself, is not amiss, but brought to countenance their bad cause, or else to prejudice the truth of ours, by raising a suspicion in the ignorant of our bad dealing, as if we taught the contrary.

3. His second fortress is, that “neither our Saviour Christ nor his apostles did ever tax the prelates, or inferior priests, by these names directly, but always under the name of Scribes and Pharisees,” lest they might thereby seem to reprehend the priesthood or seat of authority. And this they did that men might know honour and reverence to be due unto the prelacy or priesthood, although the priests or prelates in their lives and persons were not so commendable. The consequence is not amiss; albeit his reason be not so firm, and the corollary which he hence deduceth most malicious. “Hence,” saith he^p, “we are given to understand,

^o Matt. xxiii.

^p Nota tria. Primo, toto illo capite Dominum reprehendere vitia Scribarum et Phariseorum, et quia poterant infirmi ex eo colligere, non esse credendum prælatis qui male vivunt, ideo, initio capitis aperte docere voluisse, non obstante mala vita præ-

latorum sequendam esse eorum doctrinam. Secundo nota cum Cypriano lib. 4. epist. 9. Nunquam Dominum, neque apostolos in tota scriptura reprehendisse pontifices et sacerdotes Judæorum, nominando eos pontifices vel sacerdotes, sed solum sub nomine Scribarum et Phariseorum; ne

that the heretics of this age, which upon every occasion inveigh against bishops, priests, especially the pope, do but ill consent in manners with our Saviour and his apostles." But did neither our Saviour Christ nor his apostles tax the priests and prelates by their proper names for that reason which Bellarmine brings?

We may suppose, I trust without offence, that God's prophets did not go beyond their commission in taxing the chief offences or offenders of their times; that our Saviour or his apostles might upon the like or greater occasions have used the same form of reprehension the prophets did, or other more personal. The true reason why so they did not was, because they had no such respect of persons or titles as Bellarmine dreams of, but aimed chiefly at the fairest, for such usually gave greatest countenance to foulest sins. And who knows not, how in the synagogue's later days, the glorious titles of Scribes and Pharisees had in a sort drowned the names of priests; as the reputation of Jesuits hath of late years much eclipsed all other titles of inferior ministers, heretofore more famous in the Romish church? It was likewise the high esteem of these two saint-like sects, which seduced most silly souls throughout Jewry to follow traditions contrary to God's laws, as the Jesuits' late fame hath drawn most of the blind church's children (which go more by ear than eyesight) to account villainy piety, and

Bellar-
mine's idle
and malici-
ous collec-
tions out of
our Savi-
our's words
refuted.

viderentur reprehendere cathedram et sacerdotium, et ut intelligeremus, semper deberi honorem sacerdotio et pontificatui, etiamsi forte persona quæ in cathedra sedet, sit minus bona. Ex quo intelligimus hæreticos hujus temporis, qui passim in episcopos et sacerdotes et præci-

pue in ipsum summum ecclesiæ pontificem invehuntur, nihil habere commune, cum moribus Domini, et apostolorum. Tertio nota quod Dominus de cathedra Moysis dicit, intelligi a fortiori de cathedra Petri. Bellar. de Interp. Ver. Dei, l. 3. c. 5.

falsehood subtilty. As our Saviour and his apostles reprehended the rabbies or priests in their times, not under the names of priests and Levites, but under the glorious names of Scribes and Pharisees, then reputed the only guides of godliness; so would they, were they now on earth, (as we in imitation of them,) tax the Romish clergy, especially under the names of Jesuits, or other more famous orders in that church. But the sect of Scribes and Pharisees being not known in Malachi's time, nor any other order so glorious then as the order of priests, he tells them their own in their proper names; *And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you*^r. So did Micah and Zephaniah, and every prophet, as their demerits gave occasion.

4. His third fortress is, that "whatsoever Christ saith of Moses' chair must be conceived to make more for St. Peter's and such as sat therein." Why our Saviour's admonition should make more for the pope's authority within his own territories than it did for the Scribes' and Pharisees' or high priest's authority in the land of Jewry, I see no reason. That it may concern the people living under the pope and clergy of Rome, as much as it did the people of Jewry then subject to the high priest, Scribes and Pharisees, I will not deny; for such judges as they were, the popes of Rome in their several generations may be, nay, would God they were not. Let us see then what infallibility in giving definitive sentence Bellarmine can prove out of the fore-mentioned place. The words are plain, *Whatsoever they bid you do, that do*. What? All, without any exception? nay, you do the papists wrong, if you collect
 459 so;—whatsoever they speak *ex cathedra*. Then the proposition, though most universal for the form, is restrained by our adversaries themselves unto such doc-

^s Mal. ii. 1.

trines only as they taught *ex cathedra*. And justly, seeing this restraint hath more apparent ground in the text than any other. Therefore it is said, *They sit in Moses' seat*, they are infallible, not always, because they sometimes sit, but whiles *they sit in Moses' seat*, or give sentence out of it: what is it then to give sentence out of Moses' seat? to pronounce sentence solemnly and upon deliberation? If unto all their doctrines or definitive sentences so pronounced men had been bound in conscience to yield obedience, the pope (as shall be shewed anon) had never sat in Peter's chair; yea, Peter himself had been in conscience bound to be an *apostata* from Christ. But what is the meaning of these words? *They sit in Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do*;—that is, all that Moses first said and they recite. This is a strange interpretation indeed, will the ignorant or illiterate papist reply; yet, to omit many others of their own, a late Jesuit's^s, whose skill

Maldonate's restraint of the former injunction.

^s Cum jubet servare, ac facere, quæ Scribæ et Pharisei (dum in cathedra Moysis sedent) dicunt; non de ipsorum, sed de legis ac Moysis doctrina loquitur; perinde enim est, acsi dicat, "Omnia, quæ lex et Moyses vobis dixerint Scribis et Phariseis recitantibus, servate ac facite," secundum autem opera eorum nolite facere, ut Hilar. et Hieron. videntur intellexisse. Cur ergo, dicet aliquis, non dixit, quæcunque Moyses dicet, servate ac facite, sed quæcunque Scribæ et Pharisei dixerint? Duplex reddi causa potest: altera, quod voluerit Scribarum et Phariseorum hypocrisin arguere; non autem arguisset nisi dixisset eos aliter vivere, aliter docere. Altera, quod

toto capite acerbe eos esset reprehensurus, et conveniebat aliquantulum eos prius laudare, ne omnia ex affectu, et sine iudicio improbare videretur. Maldonat. in Matt. xxiii. 3. St. Austin's answer, "Non loquitur de Phariseis, nisi in cathedra Moyses sedentibus; tunc autem cathedra ipsa coegit eos vera dicere." He thus replies; "Quis dubitat illa ipsa falsa, quæ docebant, in cathedra ipsa, si in cathedra sedebant, aut in synagoga et schola Moysis docuisse?" Seeing the Jesuit thus rejects the distinction of speaking *ex cathedra*, or as private men, what reason have we to acknowledge the pope's public or infallible spirit, whilst he speaks *ex cathe-*

in expounding scriptures (save only where doting love unto their church hath made him blind) none of theirs, few of our church, hath surpassed: "When he commands to observe and do all that the Scribes and Pharisees say whilst they sit in Moses' seat, he speaks not of theirs, but of Moses his doctrine: the meaning is as if he had said, Whatsoever the law or Moses (recited by the Scribes and Pharisees) shall say unto you, that observe and do, but do not ye according to their works." This he takes to be St. Hilary's and St. Hierom's exposition of the place. If any man yet further demand, why our Saviour did not speak more plainly, Whatsoever Moses saith, observe and do, rather than, *Whatsoever the Scribes and Pharisees say, observe and do*; Maldonate in the same place gives two reasons: "The first, because our Saviour did now purpose to tax the Scribes' and Pharisees' hypocrisy, which he had not taxed, unless he had shewed that they taught otherwise than they lived. The second, that in this chapter he intended to reprehend the Scribes and Pharisees sharply, and therefore it was expedient he should first commend them for some things, lest all his reproofs might seem to proceed from passion, or want of judgment." Thus far Maldonate, unto whose answer we may adjoin, that our Saviour Christ (as Maldonate also well hath noted) did speak these words unto such as had seen his miracles and heard his doctrine, and yet could not be his daily auditors with his other disciples, but were to repair to the Scribes and Pharisees, as unto their ordinary teachers and instructors in the law. Here, if we consider the humour of rude and ignorant people, (for such may we suppose most of his auditors were as yet,) it was very likely they would either be *dra*, when by their own confession he may be worse than an heretic or infidel, if we take him as a private man.

slow to hear or ready to distaste any doctrine that should proceed from the Scribes' and Pharisees' mouths, whom they had heard so much discommended by that blessed mouth, which *spake as never man's did*. For 460 it is a work of great judgment, nay of the spirit overruling the flesh, to make men relish their doctrine, whose lives and conversations they loathe. And such as are but scholars (though never so mean) to an excellent master, will usually be puffed up with a conceit of themselves from other men's conceit and commendations of him, and in this humour scorn to learn of any more meanly qualified, or of less estimation in the same profession. Again, there is a jealousy in most illiterate minds, that their preacher, if he follow not such lessons in his life as he gives them, doth not teach them as they should be taught, nor instruct them sincerely as he thinks, but rather in policy enjoins them strictness of life, that he himself may follow his pleasures without partners.

5. Hence usually are many wholesome spiritual medicines disproved ere proved or tasted, because the parties unto whom they are tendered have no conceit or relish of any good but what is pleasant to sense or profitable for secular purposes ; such as none that truly think or call good but will so entertain it in action and resolution, never willingly preferring the less before the greater, both being of the same kind. If a man should make choice of that bargain which he would persuade as less commodious unto others, none would believe he spake sincerely as he thought, but rather cunningly to prevent others, or to effect his own gain without a sharer. But whilst secular good stands in competition with spiritual, albeit we approve the one as truly good, and condemn the other as evil ; yet even the best of us is often enforced to take up that complaint, *To will*

The original of jealousies in the flock, or needless exceptions against the wholesome admonitions of pastors.

is present with me; but I find no means to perform that which is good. For I do not the good things which I would: but the evil which I would not, that do I^u. Rude and illiterate minds, ignorant of this difference between sensitive and spiritual good, (as altogether unacquainted with the one,) out of their own custom always to act what they intend, suspect their pastors, whilst they commend wholesome food unto them, do not think, because they do not, as they say. From this source issue these or the like mutterings amongst themselves—Tush! if our parson were of the same mind out of the pulpit as he makes show for in it, why should he not frame his life accordingly? Doth he love us (trow we) better than himself? nay, I warrant him, he is old enough to know what is good for himself; and if he knew that which he bids us do to be as good for him as he would make us believe it is for us, what, a' God's name, hinders him for doing it? he hath little else to do besides, much less, I am sure, than any of us.

6. To meet perhaps with all these, but especially with this last temptation, our Saviour gives his auditors this preservative; *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' chair: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but after their works do not*. As if he had said, Though their lives be hypocritical and bad, yet be not too jealous of their doctrine; they deliver that ordinarily unto you which Moses did teach your forefathers. The doctrine is exceeding good, howsoever these cursed hypocrites do not follow it; but this is God's judgment upon them, that they should see the truth with their eyes, and not understand it by laying it to their hearts.

461 7. This, I take it, is the drift of our Saviour's

^u Rom. vii. 18, 19.

speech ; whence the universal note (*whatsoever*) must be restrained to such material doctrines as the Scribes and Pharisees themselves either expressly delivered out of Moses, or whiles they interpreted him, commended to others as good in the general, howsoever they shrunk back or shuffled when they came to the practice of such particulars as crossed their humours ; or unto these precepts of good life, whose truth and equity their auditors might easily have acknowledged, either from their consonancy with the principles of nature, or other undoubted mandates of Moses' law, or from the authority of bad, yet lawful teachers, whose advice is always to be followed as good, unless there be just suspicion of evil, or sinister respects, of which their bad lives are then only just presumptions, when they handle particulars that concern themselves, as making for their gain, credit, glory, apologies in bad courses, or avertment of deserved disgrace.

The true
restraint of
the former
injunction.

8. If we take this whole universal affirmative, *Whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do*, in that sense our Saviour meant it, it is but equivalent to this or the like universal negative ; "Leave nothing undone that either Moses or such as sit in his seat commands as good," or your conscience cannot justly witness to be evil, albeit they which commend it to you for good are evil, and cannot teach themselves to do it. Few preachers in any well ordered church are so unlearned or bad of life, but what they solemnly, one time or other, deliver out of Moses and the prophets might be a sufficient rule for their hearers' internal thoughts and outward actions, did not the flock preposterously make their pastors' doings the rule of their thoughts and sayings ; always suspecting that as not good which they see left undone, and accounting all lawful for themselves to do, which they see done and practised

by their leaders. Whenas not the pastors' lives or doings, but their sayings, are to be made rules of other men's lives and actions. And our Saviour enjoins the former obedience unto the very Pharisees, who spake as well and did as ill as any could do; very patterns of hypocrisy. In expounding Moses, they could not but often inculcate the orthodoxal doctrine of good works, of almsdeeds, and liberality; yet retained they the roots of avarice in their hearts, whose bitterness would bewray itself upon particular occasions; *All these things heard the Pharisees*, saith St. Luke, *which were covetous; and they mocked him*^x. They often exhorted others to circumcise the heart, to be humble and meek as Moses was; yet remained proud themselves, ambitious of highest places in the synagogues, *inwardly full of rapine and wickedness*^y. They often taught others as Moses had done, to walk uprightly as in the sight of the Lord their God; and yet *did all their works to be seen of men*. They had often taught their auditors to *honour father and mother*, and learnedly discoursed upon the equity of this precept in general; yet could upon private respects dispense with it in sundry particulars. They said well in the former, and did ill in the latter. And albeit they justified their practice by tradition of the elders, (as the pontificians do theirs, when they absolve subjects from the bond of duty to their civil, or children to their
462 natural parents, that they may be more serviceable to the church their mother,) yet their sayings in these apologies were but accessory to their doings, not comprehended under that universal affirmative, *All whatsoever they bid you, observe and do*; but under the negative, *After their works do not*; for they were more desirous to be honoured as rabbies and fathers

^x Luke xvi. 14.^y Luke xi. 39.

of the congregation, than to honour the parents of their flesh ; albeit they usually taught others so to do, save only when their treasury might be enriched, or their own honour enlarged by dispensations, which the people easily might have discerned for contrary, as well to the law of God and nature, as to these dispensators' own doctrine, when themselves were not parties.

9. From the restraint of this universal precept, we may easily limit that speech of our Saviour unto St. Peter which Bellarmine labours to make more than most universal, because the surest ground (in their supposal) of the pope's transcendent authority ; *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*, Matt. xvi. 19. " By these keys," saith Bellarmine^z, " is understood a power of loosing, not only sins, but all other bonds or impediments, without whose removal there is no possibility of entrance into the kingdom of heaven ; for the promise is general : nor is it said, *whomsoever*, but *whatsoever thou loosest*, &c., giving us hereby to understand, that Peter and his successors may loose all knots or difficulties, of what kind soever ; if of laws, by dispensing with them ; if of sins, by remitting them ; if of controversies or opinions, by unfolding them." Thus far would this cunning sophister improve the universal *whatsoever* above its ordinary and ancient value in

The authority of the keys not universal, but to be limited as the former precept or injunction hath been.

^z Per istas claves non solum intelligitur potestas solvendi a peccatis, sed etiam ab omnibus aliis vinculis et impedimentis, quæ nisi tollantur, non potest intrari in regnum cœlorum : siquidem promissio generalis est, nec dicitur, *Quemcunque solveris*, sed *Quodcunque solveris*, ut in-

telligamus, Nodos omnes, seu legum, dispensando, seu peccatorum et pœnarum, relaxando, seu dogmatum, et controversiarum, explicando, a Petro ejusque successoribus solvi posse.—Bellar. de Verbi Dei Interpret. lib. 3. cap. 5. initio.

scripture phrase ; further than the condition of the party to whom the promise was made (being Christ's servant, not his equal) will suffer. For what greater prerogative could Christ himself challenge, than such as Bellarmine (for the present pope's sake) would make St. Peter's ? The universal note in this place, as the like before, includes only an abundant assurance of the power bequeathed ; a full and irrevocable ratification of the keys' right use, such a shutting as none can open, such an opening as none can shut ; as often as sentence is either way given upon sufficient and just occasions. The proper subject that limits the universal form of this more than princely prerogative is the denial or confession of Christ, either in open speech, in perpetual actions or resolution ; as shall be (by God's assistance) made evident against Romish assertions, without derogation from the royalty of priesthood, which within these territories is much more dreadful and sovereign than worldlings will acknowledge, until they be made feel the full stroke of the spiritual sword, in these our days for the most part borne in vain.

10. Whatsoever reasons else they can from any other places of scripture pretend for absolute infallibility in the high priests or church representative under the law, fall of their own accord, these fundamental ones being overthrown. But before I proceed to evince the Jewish supreme tribunal most grossly erroneous *de facto*, I must request the ingenious readers, as many as understand Latin, and can have
463 access unto these great doctors' writings, to be eye-witnesses with us, or, if it please them, public notaries of their wretchless impieties. Of which unless authentic notice be now taken and propagated to posterity by evident testimonies beyond exception, this impudent generation in future ages, when these abominations

grow old, and more stirred in, begin so to stink, that for the church's temporal health, the books of modern Jesuits must be purged, will surely deny that ever any of their grand divines were so mad with incestuous love of their whorish mother as to seek her maintenance by such shameless, gross, notorious, palpable, written blasphemies, as ungracious Judas would rather have choked with an halter in their birth than have granted them entrance into the world through his throat. He, in comparison of these Antichristian traitors, ingenuously confessed his foul offence in betraying innocent blood. But even the flower of Romish doctors, bishops, and cardinals, are not ashamed to justify him in betraying, and the Scribes and Pharisees in solemnly condemning our Saviour; for if the one sort did not err in judgment, the other did not amiss in executing what they enjoined: yet by that very consistory of priests and elders, brought in by Bellarmine as chief supporters of the church's infallibility, was the Life of the world censured to death for a heretic, or refractarious schismatic; and the Talmudists^a, taking that consistory's authority but for such as the Jesuits supposed, conclude directly from principles common to the synagogue and the Roman church, that he deserved no less, because he would not subscribe unto their sentence, nor recant his opinions.

That no argument can be drawn from the former place to prove the church's infallibility, but will be as forcible to justify the condemnation of our Saviour.

^a Tria illa genera traditionum hoc loco lex dicuntur, puta, ordinationes, edicta, vel traditiones et consuetudines legitimæ, quibus in multitudine, publica honestas continetur. Hinc, est quod prophetæ constantissime refragati sunt, quoties contra stationes montis Sinai, ut vocant, aut reges, aut iudices, aut populus aliquid admiserat. (Of which

see the annotations to the eleventh paragr. of the former chapter.) In Talmud scribitur Dominum nostrum illis damnatum. Cæterum accusationem falso intenderunt, quia nunquam voluit pontificum et Phariseorum tanquam iudicum auctoritatem esse convulsam, sed stabilitam potius. Matt. xxiii. 2. Fagius in Deut. xvii. [10.]

11. Again, if we understand that other place—*The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do*—universally, as most papists do, (and Hart out of his Transmarinal Catechism would gladly have maintained it,) any Jew might thus assume: The Scribes and Pharisees solemnly bid Judas and others to observe our Saviour as a seducer or traitor, and charged the people to seek his blood; therefore they were in consciences, and upon pain of damnation, bound so to do. Do I amplify one word, or wrong them a jot in these collections? I appeal unto their own writers. Let Melchior Canus, inferior to none in that church for learning, and for a papist a man of singular ingenuity, be judge betwixt us. If from his words as much as I have said do not most directly follow, let me die the death for this supposed slander. Against the absolute infallibility of councils or synods, maintained by him in his fifth book, our writers, as he frames their arguments, thus object: “The priests and Pharisees called councils, whose solemn sentences were impious, because they condemned the Son of God for such: in like sort may the Romish prelacy give sentence contrary unto Christ.”

464 “Unto this objection,” saith Canus^b, “the answer is

^b Ad id quod deinceps sequitur, non est difficile respondere. Nam sacerdotum veterum acta quidem Christo adversa fuerunt, at sententia hominum alioqui pessimorum non solum verissima, sed reipublicæ etiam utilissima fuit. Quin divinum oraculum fuisse Joan. Evangel. testatur. Cum enim post longam variamque concilii deliberationem Caiaphas, qui ut summus pontifex concilio præsidebat, sententiam illam, cui omnes fere consense-

runt, dixisset: *Expedit nobis, ut unus moriatur homo pro populo, et non tota gens pereat*: mox evangelista subiecit; *Hoc autem a semetipso non dixit, sed cum esset pontifex anni illius prophetavit*. Qua ex re fit, ut et nostrorum pontificum vita quidem et opera contraria forte sint Domino Jesu; sed eorum judicia, quæ videlicet a summo pontifice comprobata sint, et vera erunt, et Christianis utilia, ut quæ ad populi salutem sint divinitus in-

easy." Let us hear it. "The practices of the priests were indeed against our Saviour; but the sentence of men otherwise most wicked, was not only most true, but withal most profitable to the commonweal. Yea, St. John the Evangelist tells us, it was a Divine oracle; for after a long and various deliberation used by the council, Caiaphas, who now sat as chief, being the high priest, pronounced that sentence whereunto almost all (at the least the major part) agreed; *It is expedient that one die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not*; upon which speech the evangelist forthwith adds, *This he spake not of himself: but being high priest for that year, he prophesied.* Whence it follows," saith Canus, "that our prelates' lives and actions may perhaps be contrary to our Lord Jesus; but their judicial decrees or sentences, such as are confirmed by the pope," (who must be president in their councils as Caiaphas was,) "shall prove true and profitable unto Christians, as instituted by God for the people's good; yea, they shall proceed from the Holy Ghost, for the reason which we have learned of the evangelist, to wit, because such as give them are prelates of Christ's church. And this is all I have to say unto the second argument."

12. It is easy indeed for them thus to answer, to whom it is most easy and most usual to blaspheme. That the pope's as well as Caiaphas's prophecies may in the event prove true and profitable to Christ's church, we do not doubt; because unto such as love God, or are beloved of him, all things, even Satan's malice, that had suborned Caiaphas and his brethren against Christ

stituta. Imo adeo a Spiritu Sancto erunt ob eam causam, quam ab evangelista didicimus, quia scilicet ecclesiæ Christi pon-

tifices sunt. At de secundo argumento satis.—Canus, lib. 5. cap. ult. initio.

and his members, turn to the best. But he that had taken this high priest, whilst he uttered this sentence, for an infallible prophet of the Lord, had been bound in conscience to have done so to our Saviour at his, as the people did to Baal's priests at Elias's instigation. If our adversaries will permit us to interpret the Trent council's decrees as the faithful of those times did Caiaphas' prophecy, we will subscribe unto them without delay. It is expedient, we grant, and profitable withal unto the church, that there should be such decrees, whereby the faith of others might be tried. But as it was not lawful for the people to imbrue their hands in Christ's blood, though the greatest benefit that ever befell the world was by his death; so neither is it safe to admit the Trent canons, though a wonderful blessing of God they should be set forth, because they so clearly testify the truth of his word concerning Antichrist. Canus said more in this than was needful, according to his supposed principles in his answer to the next argument. But God who ruled the mouth of Caiaphas, and made him speak the truth, when he intended nothing less, did also direct Canus's pen to vent, what upon better consideration he would have concealed. Yet herein he wrote but out of the abundance of his own and most of his fellows' hearts, who hold, that the priests and Pharisees did err only in a
465 matter of fact, not in any point of faith, when they condemned Christ^c. For conclusion of this, consider with me, Christian reader, how great cause we have to thank our gracious God that the sect of Jesuits, or rabble of predicants, were not founded in our Saviour's days; for then doubtless the Devil had picked a traitor out of that crew, whose impudent, sophistical apologies for open blasphemy, and unrelenting perseverance in

^c See cap. 15.

traitorous plots, might have outfaced the world, that the delivering of Christ into his enemies' hands had been no such sin as Judas testified it was, both by his penitent speech and desperate end.

CHAP. XIV.

What it would disadvantage the Romish Church to deny the Infallibility of the Synagogue.

1. THAT any visible company of men before our Saviour Christ's time, did challenge such absolute authority over men's faith as the pope doth, would be very hard for them to prove; and no question but the high priests and rulers amongst the Jews did oftentimes challenge more than they had. If the Romanist should say, that they had no such infallible authority in deciding all controversies as their church now challengeth; the assertion would be as improbable in itself as incongruous to their positions. For unto any indifferent man such infallibility in the watch tower of Zion must needs seem more requisite during the time of the Law, than since the promulgation of the Gospel. Be it granted, the points to be expressly believed of the ancient people were but few; yet even such of them as were most necessary to salvation were more enigmatically and mystically set down than any in the New Testament are; and the measure of God's Spirit upon every sort of men, (the vulgar especially,) in those times, much less. For this cause God raised up prophets to instruct them, whose authority, though it was not such as the Roman church now challengeth, (but given to supply the ignorance and negligence of the church representative in those days,) yet much greater than is ordinarily required in the light of the gospel, by which, as the doctrine of salvation is become most conspicuous in itself, so is the illumination of God's Spirit more plen-

Such infallible authority as the Jesuits plead for, more necessary in the time of the Law than of the Gospel.

tiful than before it had been. And since the Prophets have been so clearly expounded by the apostles, and the harmony of the two Testaments so distinctly heard, *the ordinary testimony of Jesus* is become equivalent to *the spirit of prophecy*^d. Allowing then these infinite odds on our parts, that enjoy the labours of former ages with the ordinary preaching of the gospel, an infallible œcumenical authority is much less needful now than it was in the law

Unless the Jewish church were infallible, our adversaries' principal arguments, to prove the Romish church's infallibility, are apparently false.

2. Or if our adversaries will be so wayward as to deny the like infallibility to have been requisite in the ancient Jewish church, they shall hereby thwart evidently themselves, disannul their chief title, and utterly disclaim the main plea hitherto used for their own infallibility. For most of them do urge God's promises made unto that church, to prove a necessity of admitting a like authority in theirs. And if these promises made to the Jews admit any distinction, condition, or limitation, whereby this most absolute infallibility (as they suppose it) may be impaired, then may all the promises made or supposed to be made unto their church, admit the same, or like. But besides the weakening of their title, by debarring themselves of this plea, (drawn from the example of the ancient Jewish church,) no man that reads their writings can be ignorant, that all their chief and principal arguments (wherewith they carry away most simple souls, and importune such as almost neither fear God nor man, to give sentence for them and their church against us) are drawn from these or the like topics: Unless God had ordained one supreme judge, or infallible authority, that might decide all controversies in matters of faith *viva voce*, he had not sufficiently provided for his church; yea, which were most absurd, he had left

^d Rev. xix. 10.

it in worse estate than civil estates are for ordinary matters; for they, besides their written laws, have judges to determine all cases or controversies arising. And seeing that monarchical government is of all others the best, and in any wise man's judgment most available for avoiding all dissension, and keeping the unity of faith, there should be no question but God hath ordained such an authentical manner of deciding all controversies. If he have not, it must needs be either because he could not establish such an infallible authority and uncontrollable power, or else because he would not. To say he could not, were to deny his omnipotency—open blasphemy; to say he would not, were little better, for this were to deny his goodness and love to his church, both which the scriptures testify to be great, nay infinite.

3. But how great soever his love to his church and chosen be, (as we acknowledge it to be infinite and everlasting,) if these or the like arguments make any thing for the infallibility of the present Romish, they prove as much and as directly for the ancient Jewish church. For that was a visible company of men, (not of oxen and asses, and of them God had a care also.) Nay, they were his own peculiar people, and (without all controversy) the only visible church which he had on earth^e. Wherefore all the former arguments, if

^e Yet I know not what Bel-larmine should mean, when he makes it a particular church; his folly confutes itself, and it shall be sufficient to propose it. Bel-larm. de Eccles. Milit. lib. 3. cap. 16. Ad tertium, de tempore Eliæ, negatur consequentia, et antecedens hujus argumenti. Consequentia quidem, quia non est eadem ratio populi

Judæorum, et populi Christianorum: nam populus Judæorum non erat ecclesia universalis, ut est populus Christianorum, sed particularis, et propterea etiam extra illum populum inveniabantur fideles et justī, ut Melchisedech, Job, et postea Cornelius centurio, et eunuchus Candacis reginæ, et alii nonnulli. Itaque etiam si universa synagoga Ju-

they conclude any infallible authority in the present Romish church, they conclude much more for the like infallibility of the Jewish. And by necessary consequence, if I prove that church had no such authority, my assertion stands sure, That this infallible authority which the factors of the Romish church do challenge, is greater than any visible company of men had before our Saviour's time. And by the same proof shall the Romish church be debarred for ever of both the two former pleas; either drawn from the authority of the priests, or from the best form of government.

That justly it may be presumed the Jewish Church never had any absolute Infallibility in proposing or determining Articles of Faith, because in our Saviour's Time it did so grievously err in the fundamental Point of Salvation.

1. FOR proof of the conclusion proposed, That Jerusalem had no such absolute infallibility as Rome pleads for; I took it for a long time as granted by all, that if any such authority had been established in the law, it should not have varied until the alteration of the

daorum defecisset, non continuo omnis ecclesia Dei in terris defecisset. Sed antecedens etiam negatur. Non enim ostendi potest, unquam synagogam Judæorum defecisse omnino usque ad Christi adventum, quo tempore etiam non tam defecit, quam mutata est in melius. His comparison holds right thus: None were saved then but Israelites, none now but Christians in heart: divers were saved then, though not Israelites by outward profession, or solemn association to the people of God: so are many now, that are not

professed members of the true visible church, whether that be theirs or ours. They think many amongst us ignorant of theirs, and we in charity hope many amongst them ignorant of our church's tenents, yet ready to embrace them when it shall please God to reveal them, are elected to salvation. But it was a pretty sophism in so great a clerk to compare, not Israelites in heart, or in the sight of God, but the visible church of Israel, with Christians in heart, not with any visible Christian church.

priesthood. For God's covenant with Levi was in this sense everlasting, that it was to endure without interruption until His sacrifice was accomplished that was a priest after a more excellent order. His oblation of himself was the common bond to the law and gospel; the end of the one, and the beginning of the other. Nor did the legal rites or ceremonies themselves (though these most obnoxious to corruption) vanish by little and little, as this sacrifice did approach nearer and nearer, as darkness doth before the rising of the sun: rather that consummation wrought upon the cross did swallow them up at once, as virility doth youth, youth childhood, childhood infancy. Seeing then our adversaries suppose this infallibility was annexed as a prerogative royal unto the priesthood, they cannot imagine any tolerable reason why the one should expire before the other was quite abolished. Hence it is that most of them hold the Scribes and Pharisees in our Saviour's time were absolutely infallible in their cathedral consultations. And I had just reasons to presume Bellarmine had been of the same mind. For besides his urging that place, (without all sense or reason, unless grounded on this opinion,) *They sit in Moses' chair; all therefore whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do*, these other words of his seemed to imply thus much; "It cannot be shewed that the synagogue of the Jews did fail [in faith] until Christ's coming, at what time it did not fail, but rather became better by change^f." By his speeches elsewhere I perceived, by the synagogue thus changed, he meant the church planted by Christ; not the consistory of the

^f Non ostendi potest, unquam synagogam Judæorum defecisse omnino usque ad Christi adventum, quo tempore etiam non tam

defecit, quam mutata est in melius.—Bellar. de Ecclesia Militante, l. 3. c. 16.

high priests and elders, not the catholic representative Jewish church. “For,” saith he^g, “as it is not necessary the pope’s vicar should be inerrable, when the
468 pope himself doth guide the church and defend it from error; so neither was it necessary that the Jewish high priest should not err, when Christ the high priest of the whole church was present, and did govern his church in person.”

2. This example, were it true, might illustrate (though ill-favouredly) his assertion once supposed, as possible, but no way argues it to be probable. Herein his similitude fails, that the high priests in our Saviour’s time were Aaron’s lawful successors, their priesthood as entire then as ever it was, and they deputies to none in this rank or order. That their predecessors had such infallibility he fain would prove. Can he, or any for him, shew us when, or by what means it should determine, whiles the priesthood lasted? To take away the pope’s infallibility, even in this last age of the world, were in their construction to deny Christ’s pro-

^g Sunt qui dicunt, concilium illud (in quo Christus condemnatus est) errasse, quia non processit secundum morem legitimi iudicii, sed tumultuaria conspiratione, subornatis falsis testibus, Christum damnavit, id quod adeo notum erat omnibus, ut etiam Pilatus sciret per invidiam eum fuisse traditum sibi a pontificibus, ut habemus, Matt. xxvii. atque hæc quidem responsio probabilis est. Quia tamen non est inferiorum judicare, an superiores legitime procedant necne, nisi manifestissime constet intolerabilem errorem committi; et credibile est Deum non permissurum, ut concilia quibus summus pontifex præsidet, non

legitime procedant; ideo respondemus; Pontifices et concilia Judæorum non potuisse errare antequam Christus veniret, sed eo præsentē potuisse, imo fuisse prædictum erraturos Judæos et Christum negaturos. Isaïæ vi. Dan. ix. et alibi. Sicut enim non est necessarium, ut vicarius papæ non possit errare, cum ipse papa regat ecclesiam, et ab errore defendat: sic etiam non fuit necessarium, ut pontifices Judæorum non possent errare, quando Christus, summus totius ecclesiæ pontifex præsens aderat, et ecclesiam per se administrabat.—Bellar. lib. 2. de Concil. auct. cap. 8.

mise made unto St. Peter's chair. And was not the former like prerogative as inseparably annexed to Moses' seat? Did our Saviour before his passover, either by doctrine or practice, derogate aught from any lawful authority established on earth, much less from that which God had expressly instituted? The greatest prerogative the Scribes and Pharisees, priests or rulers, ever had, was, that they were Aaron's successors, and possessed Moses' place; and this authority was never disannulled, but rather ratified by our Saviour, after he had undertaken his ministerial function; *They sit in Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do.* And elsewhere, *Go, and shew thyself unto the priest, &c.*

3. Yet this sophister would persuade us that Isaiah and Daniel had foretold the expiration of this prerogative in latter times. They both indeed foretell this people's extraordinary general blindness about the time of our Saviour's conversation on earth. But this directly proves what we object, not what Bellarmine should have answered, at least to us, who contend the priests and rulers of this people were not infallible in our Saviour's time; nor doth Isaiah or Daniel, or any prophet of God say, they were at any time such. Let any Jesuit prove (what easily he may) out of Isaiah's^h words cited by Bellarmine, that the Jewish church representative was not infallible in our Saviour's time; and from the same we shall as clearly evince it palpably erroneous in Isaiah's own days, or immediately after. For the selfsame words which the evangelist saith were fulfilled in the unbelieving Jews that heard our Saviour's doctrine, were literally and exactly veri-

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^h For Daniel hath nothing which can be wrested to this purpose, for which reason this impostor cites only his ninth chapter at large.

fied of their forefathers before the captivity of Babylon, as the cardinal himself, (would he take the pains to read the whole chapter, and review the place cited by him,) I know, would not deny: his words are these: *And he said, Go, and say unto this people, Ye shall hear indeed, but ye shall not understand; ye shall plainly see, and not perceive. Make the heart of this people fat, make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and he heal them. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great desolation in the midst of* 469 *the land*ⁱ. The truth of our assertion is so pregnant, that Maldonate^k, the most judicious expositor amongst

ⁱ Isaiah vi. 9—12.

^k Dicitur autem prophetia, quantum observare potui, quatuor modis impleri. Primo, quum id ipsum fit, de quo proprie et literaliter sensu intelligebatur, sicut cap. i. 22. Matthæus dixit, impletam in Maria, Isaïæ prophetiam fuisse, *Ecce virgo concipiet, et pariet filium*. Secundo, cum fit, non id, de quo proprie intelligebatur prophetia, sed id, quod per illud significabatur, ut 2 Regum vii. 14. *Ego ero illi in patrem, et ille erit mihi in filium*, quod proprie de Solomone dictum esse perspicuum est. Divus tamen Paulus, de Christo, cujus Solomon figura erat, interpretatur, Heb. i. 6. quasi in eo impletum esset. Et quod Exod. xii. 46. dictum est, *Os non comminuetis ex eo*, certum est intelligi de agno, tamen Joan. xix. 36. in

Christo, qui per agnum significabatur impletum dicit. Tertio, cum nec id fit, de quo proprie intelligitur prophetia, nec id quod per illud significatur, sed quod illi simile erat, et omnino ejusmodi, ut prophetia non minus apte de eo, quam de quo dicta est, dici potuisse videatur. Nam *populus hic labiis me honorat*, de Judæis qui tempore Isaïæ erant, Deus dixerat Isai. xxix. 13. Christus autem in iis, qui suo erant tempore, impletum significat, Matt. xv. 7, 8. Simile est exemplum Matthæi, xiii. 14. et Act. xxviii. 26. Quarto, cum id ipsum, quod per prophetiam, aut scripturam dictum erat, quamvis jam factum fuerit, tamen magis, ac magis fit. Tunc enim scriptura impleri dicitur, id est, quod per eam dictum erat, cumulatissime fieri.—Maldonat.

the Jesuits, takes it as granted the words late cited were literally meant only of that generation with whom the prophet lived, and brings this very text as one of the aptest instances to illustrate "the third kind," as he makes it, "of fulfilling prophecies," to wit, when that which is truly and literally meant of one, is fitly applied unto another matter or sort of people, for the similitude of their nature or disposition. Although (to speak the truth) he might have referred it more justly, at least more artificially, to the fourth kind there mentioned by him. For, as shall appear hereafter, this prophecy was alike literally, properly, and directly meant of both, but verified of the former times more immediately, as first in order, because that part of its object had precedency in actual existence; of the latter more completely, as principally intended by the Holy Ghost.

4. The blindness there spoken of was even then begun, but did increase from that age until the captivity, and continued until Christ's coming, in whose days it was augmented, and the prophecy fully accomplished; as the desolation which followed their blindness in putting him to death was greater than that which Nebuchadnezzar brought upon the city and land for the provocations wherewith Manasseh, Jehoiachim, and other wicked rulers, as well priests as laics, had provoked the Lord, by cruel persecution of his messengers sent unto them. This was a disease in their prelates and elders, lineally descending to the Scribes and Pharisees, who took themselves for infallible teachers¹, and free from oppugning such doctrine as their forefathers had persecuted unto the death. The sin of

Comment. in Matt. ii. 15. The place cited Matt. xiii. 14, Acts xxviii. 26, is that very place out of the sixth of Esay, which Bel-

larmine urgeth to prove the Jews' church should fail in our Saviour's time.

¹ See cap. 19.

these latter in crucifying Christ was in degree more grievous, because his personal worth was much greater than the prophets'; but the ignorance was of the same kind in both; for as our Saviour saith, (Matt. xxiii. 32,) the latter did but *fulfil the measure of their fathers' iniquity* in murdering God's messengers. And, as afterwards shall be declared, such as the Romanists account the church representative most infallible, did continually cause or countenance these persecutions. ^mThe original likewise of this cruelty continued from former to latter generations was the very same in both; the one distasted God's words whilst the prophet spake them; the other understood them not, whilst they were read every sabbath day unto them; both fulfilled them in condemning God's messengers ⁿ, and shedding innocent blood, upon such gross and palpable blindness as Isaiah describes.

470 5. It will recreate the attentive reader to observe, how the Lord hath confounded the language of these cunning builders, whiles they seek to raise up new Babylon from the foundation of the old synagogue. Bellarmine would seem to make a conscience of blaspheming, and therefore hath rather adventured to be reputed ridiculous, in avouching, (as you heard before,) without all ground or show of reason, that the infallible authority, formerly established in the synagogue, did expire upon our Saviour's entrance into his ministerial function^o. Many of his fellows knowing how

^m *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised hearts and ears, ye have always resisted the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of that Just One; of whom*

ye are now the betrayers and murderers. Acts vii. 51.

ⁿ Acts xiii. 27.

^o Respondeo, quidam aiunt, quæstionem fuisse de facto, non de jure, quam concilium illud judicavit, videlicet, Num Jesus necandus esset; in ejusmodi autem judiciis concilia errare posse,

necessary it is for them to defend the public spirit of the synagogues, and conscious withal how frivolous it would be to say it should vanish by our Saviour's presence, who came rather by doctrine and practice to establish, than overthrow any ordinance of the law, resolve (though by open blasphemy) to maintain the Scribes' and Pharisees' infallibility, until the abolishing of Aaron's priesthood. That they condemned our Saviour was (in these men's judgments) an error only in matter of fact, not of faith or doctrine; and in such case the pope himself may err, whiles he speaks *ex cathedra*. That the high priest did not err in faith, they take it as proved, because the evangelist saith *he prophesied, It were good one should die for the people.* John xi. 50.

6. Such infallibility as this I never shall envy the pope; and I desire no more than that he would confirm this last cited doctrine *ex cathedra*. For no question but all such throughout the Christian world as bear any love to Christ at all, (any besides the Jesuits, who make no conscience of vilifying their Redeemer for advancing the pope's dignity, by defending his infallibility,) would renounce his decrees, and take him for Antichrist ever after. For this was no error

non dubium est. At quæstio illa, etiamsi de facto esset, tamen involvebat quæstionem de fide gravissimam, nimirum, An Jesus esset verus Messias, et Dei filius, atque adeo Deus verus. Quocirca erravit in fide perniciosissime Caiaphas cum universo concilio, cum judicavit Jesum blasphemasse, qui se Dei Filium appellaverat. Alii dicunt, pontificem et concilium errasse, quantum ad errorem propriæ mentis, non tamen errasse in sententia,

quam protulit. Vere enim Jesus erat reus mortis, quia peccata nostra in seipso purganda suscepit, et vere expediebat, eum mori pro populo. Quare Johan. cap. xi. dicit Caiapham prophetasse. At licet verba Caiaphæ bonum sensum recipiant, non tamen omnia, cum enim ait de Christo, *Blasphemavit, quid adhuc egemus testibus?* Certe tunc non prophetavit, sed blasphemavit.—Bellar. de Conciliorum auct. cap. 8. lib. 2.

de facto, upon false information or privy suggestion. Even the high priests themselves, for the inveterate hate which they had borne unto our Saviour's person and doctrine, (such as the Romish church did unto Huss and Jerome of Prague,) hold a council how they might put him to death; and so far were they from being misled with false information, that they suborn false witnesses against him, and failing in this, seek to ensnare him in his own confession; and finally condemn him with joint consent, for avouching one of the main points of Christian belief, the article of his coming to judgment. I think might Satan himself speak his mind in this case, he would condemn Gretzer and his fellows, if not for their villainy, yet for their intolerable folly, in questioning whether it were an error in faith or no to pronounce the sentence of death with such solemnity against the Judge of quick and dead, for professing and teaching the main points and grounds of faith. This villainy is too open and evident to maintain the policy of the prince of darkness. And if neither fear of God nor shame of the world could bridle the Jesuits' mouths, or stop their pens from venting such doctrine, yet certainly this prince of darkness, (their lord and master,) for fear of some greater revolt, will lay his command upon them, and make them in this discoursing age speak more warily, though they mean still no less wickedly.

- 471 7. Because this is a point worth the pressing, let us overthrow, not only their answers already given, or arguments hence drawn for their church's authority, but in brief prevent all possible evasions. If any papist shall here reply, that these high priests and their assistants did not speak *ex cathedra*, when they so far missed the cushion; this answer as it might perhaps drop from some ignorant Jesuit's mouth or pen, who

That the high priest with his associates did err *ex cathedra* in the main article of faith.

is bound by oath to say something (and therefore must oftentimes say he knows not what) for the defence of the church ; so we may well assure ourselves that the pope himself dare not for his triple crown deliver it *ex cathedra* ; nor will the learned papists hold this point if it be well urged. For as these high priests' error was most gross and grievous, so was it received upon long and mature deliberation, their manner of proceeding was public and solemn. *They took Jesus*, (saith the evangelist^p,) *and led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and elders were gathered together*. And lest a Jesuit should have picked a quarrel at the time of their assembly, as if they had met at some unlawful hour, St. Luke saith^q, *As soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the high priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council*, and examined him upon the very fundamental point of faith, *saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us*. For affirming this, (which is open infidelity to deny,) the high priest himself, not misled by any witnesses, but from Christ's own words^r which he himself had heard, pronounceth sentence against him. And if this were not enough, he proposed the matter to the rest of his associates ; *What think ye? And they answered and said, He is worthy to die*^s. After all this, they urged the people to approve of this their sentence, persuading them to ask Barabbas and to destroy Jesus. And so strongly had they conjured the multitude by their pretended authority, that they apprehend this their choice as a point of faith or good service to God and his church. For when Pilate layeth his blood unto their charge, *all the people* (as the text saith^t) (all such as relied upon the Scribes and Pharisees, or

^p Matt. xxvi. 57.^q Luke xxii. 66.^r Matt. xxvi. 65.^s Ver. 66.^t Matt. xxvii. 25.

their high priest) *answered and said, His blood be upon us and our children.* One of your lay papists could not have been more thoroughly persuaded of your church's authority, nor more violently bent against John Huss, or any other of Christ's martyrs, for the like reasons, than this whole multitude was against Christ, being condemned by the high priest speaking *ex cathedra*. Here were more conditions and more solemnities observed in this proceeding of theirs, than you require in the pope speaking *ex cathedra*. Theirs was a public assembly, and sentence was given by joint consent in the consistory, and in the morning: you hold it sufficient for the pope to give his definitive sentence alone, without evidence of the fact itself whereunto he ties men's faith, as shall appear by your own confessions. Nor do you limit him any time, as well in the afternoon as in the forenoon; as well (for aught we can gather) when drink is in, and his wits out of his head, as when he is sober. For you hold it not necessary for him to use any long deliberation. But, if it be his will to bind all Christians to believe him, the whole church must believe that he was herein directed by the Holy Ghost: for the church is bound to hear their chief pastor; and if he bind all men to believe 472 him, then must all of necessity believe that he was infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost in shewing that which he binds them to believe; for otherwise the whole church might err, nay were bound to err, because it is bound to believe the pope. These consequences are your own, not mine, as may in part appear from what hath been already, more fully from what shall be said hereafter. Besides, the whole multitude of the Jewish people heard the priests and elders utter their opinions concerning Christ and his doctrine *viva voce*; we have the pope's decrees but by hearsay. Either

was this sentence pronounced *ex cathedra*, or else it will be hard for you to prove that any sentence in your church hath been so pronounced, or can be, although the pope himself be present in the council, and be an eyewitness of all proceedings.

8. Yet if any of you should here shuffle, (as ye usually do at the last pinch,) and say, "Howsoever Valentinian, or some others of our learned but private spirits, may define what it is to speak *ex cathedra*, yet we know not whether our church hath so defined it or no; and therefore, although these high priests and elders did observe all the circumstances which these doctors require in a sentence given *ex cathedra*, yet, for aught we know, they might, nay sure they did fail in some circumstance which we know not, and did not indeed speak *ex cathedra*, albeit they seemed so to do: wherefore this doth not conclude against the pope's infallible authority when he speaks *ex cathedra*." If any of you shall take this last hold, (as I cannot imagine any other left you,) we shall quickly beat you out of it. For let it be granted for disputation's sake, that the pope hath (as ye suppose these Jews had) an infallible authority when he speaks *ex cathedra*; yet seeing it is a matter so hard to be known, even by these that hear him, whether he observe all circumstances required to the exercise and true use of such infallible authority, and whether he speak *ex cathedra* or no when he may seem to sundry so to speak; it would be the only safe course for all Christian churches utterly to renounce all obedience to him but upon examination of his doctrine, to stand continually upon their guard, lest under pretence of this his infallible authority when he speaks *ex cathedra*, he may work some such inestimable mischief unto the scriptures, or Christ's chosen here on earth, as these high priests did unto Christ himself, by

Though it were sufficiently proved that the pope could not teach false doctrine *ex cathedra*, yet were it not safe to rely upon his authority. Vide lib. 2. cap. 31. parag. 3, &c.

his seeming to speak *ex cathedra* when he doth not. If by abusing this his infallible authority he should either make away these scriptures, or animate the people to imbrue their hands in the blood of Christ's dearest saints ; it is not his speaking *ex cathedra* that can redeem their souls from hell, nor restore God's word again ; for these are matters of a higher price than that they should be purchased with two or three words of his holiness' unhallowed mouth.

9. To conclude, if this authority of your church be but such as the ancient church of the Jews had, you cannot expect any faithful people should otherwise esteem of your decrees than the faithful in our Saviour's time were bound to esteem of the Jewish high priests' and elders', whom surely they did not take for Christ's only nor best friends. If the pope's infallibility be but such as these high priests had, you may be as guilty of the blood of Christ's saints as they were. If you will challenge (as indeed you do) greater authority than they had, ye must of necessity renounce your principal arguments brought to prove it.

That Moses had no such absolute Authority as is now ascribed unto the Pope : that the Manner of Moses his attaining to such as he had excludes all besides our Saviour from just Challenge of the like.

1. WHETHER Moses were a magistrate (as the papists think) spiritual, or (as others) merely civil, or (whereunto, upon grounds in due places to be discussed, I most incline) actually neither, and virtually both ; it will suffice for proof of our conclusion, that the pope is no servant of God, but an adversary, in that he exalts himself above Moses, whom none besides the High Priest and sole Mediator of the new covenant was

to equalize in sovereignty over God's people. Nor doth the excess of glory ascribed unto the new testament in respect of the old, argue greater authority in Christian than was in ordinary legal governors, whether temporal or spiritual, much less doth it infer greater authority in any (Christ only excepted) than Moses had.

2. If we take Christ's church as consisting both of priests and people, it is a congregation far more royal and glorious than the synagogue so taken was. If we compare our High Priest (or Mediator of the new covenant) with theirs, the apostle's comparison is fit-test: *Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that hath appointed him, even as Moses was in all his house. For this man is counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he which hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.—Now Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a witness of the things which should be spoken after; but Christ is as the Son over his own house, whose house we are*^u. If severally we sort our people or ministers with theirs, as the apostles' successors with Aaron's, the preeminence both ways is ours. Notwithstanding, this excess of our ministers' glory, whether ordinary or extraordinary, compared with the like of theirs, is not so great as the preeminences of Christ's flock above the people of the synagogue. Yet must all excess^x in spiritual graces which the ordinary hearers of the gospel have of the ordinary hearers of the law, be subducted from that prerogative which we that are Christ's messengers have in respect of Aaron's successors, ere we can take a right account of our own authority over our flock committed to us, in comparison of theirs over the ancient people. *Computatis computandis*, our so-

That the excessive glory of the new testament argues no greater sovereignty in spiritual governors since Christ's time than the priest had in the law.

^u Heb. iii. 1, &c.

^x i. e. advantage, or preeminence.

vereignty will prove less, not greater, as our adversaries confusedly reckon without their host. Their pretended glosses, that all such places of scripture as make for the authority of Moses' chair conclude *a fortiori* for St. Peter's, because the new testament is more glorious than the old, are as if a man should argue thus: The ancient Roman and modern German are states far more noble than the Turkish or Moscovitish; therefore the Roman consuls had more absolute authority over the people, or the present emperor over the princes and states of Germany, than the Turk hath over his bashaws, or the Moscovite over his vassals.

- 474 3. The glory of a commonweal, or praise of government, consists in the ingenuity or civil liberty, not in the slavery or servile condition of the governed: or in their voluntary obsequiousness to wholesome laws, proportioned to common good; not in their absolute subjection to the omnipotent will of an unruly tyrant, subject to no law but the law of sin. Our Saviour's authority over his disciples was more sovereign than is befitting any to usurp or challenge over his fellow servants; his kingdom more glorious after his resurrection than before: yet a little before his suffering he saith to his disciples, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth call I you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his master doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father have I made known to you*^y. It is the very conceit of the base, degenerate, dissolute, sottish later heathen Roman, more delighted in such gaudy shows as his luxurious emperors made (haply, once or twice in their whole reign) than in the valour and virtue of his victorious,

^y John xv. 14, 15.

free-born ancestors, that to this day swims in the Jesuit's brain, and makes him dream the royalty of Christian priesthood, or glory of the gospel, should consist wholly or chiefly in the magnificent pomp of one visible high priest or œcumenical bishop; for garnishing of whose court the whole body of Christ besides must become content to spend their lives, goods, or substances, and as his occasion shall require, to pawn their very souls, as younglings will be at any cost or pains they can devise, to deck up a lord of the parish, a victor in a grammar school; or as merry fellows will be ready to spend more than their incomes will defray, to have a gallant lord of misrule of their own making.

4. But they demand, Wherein doth the pope aspire above the pitch of Moses' throne? he desires but to be reputed an infallible teacher, and was not Moses such? yet not such after the same manner. He approved himself perpetually infallible, because always found most faithful in all affairs belonging to God; but had it been possible for him to have *worshipped the golden calf*, to have *eaten the offerings of the dead*, or to have *joined himself to Baul-peor^z*, the Levites, and such as clave unto the Lord in these apostasies, would have sought God's will at more sanctified lips than his, at least for that time, were. If then we consider him, not as he might have been, but as indeed he proved, the people's obedience unto him was *de facto* perpetual and complete; yet but conditionally perpetual, but conditionally complete; or perpetually complete upon their sight and undoubted experience of his extraordinary familiarity with God, of his entire fidelity in all his service. The pope would be proclaimed so absolutely infallible by irrevocable patent or inheritance, as no breach of God's commandments, no touch

Wherein
the pope's
sovereignty
is made
greater
than Moses
had any.

^z Psalm cvi. 28.

of disloyalty to Christ in actions, might breed a forfeiture of his estate, or estrange Christian consciences from yielding obedience to him, every way as complete and absolute as that which the people of God performed unto Moses, or Christians do yet unto their Saviour. Whence though we admit Moses' infallibility and his to be the same, yet the difference between the absoluteness of their authority, or the tenor or holds of the same infallibility, would be such as is between a tenant at will, or one that enjoys a fair estate, perhaps, all his lifetime, yet only by continuance of his lord's good liking of his faithful service; and a freeholder, that cannot by any act of felony, murder, treason, or the like, forfeit his interest in as large possessions.

5. Again, albeit the authority gotten or manner of holding it were the same, yet the manner of getting it in Moses and the pope is not alike. The one proffers no miracle for the purchase, no sign from heaven, no admirable skill in expounding God's word; his calling he professeth to be but ordinary, and in this respect (say his followers) he was to succeed St. Peter. Moses not such, nor so affected: his miracles were many and great; the signs and tokens of his especial favour with God almost infinite; his calling extraordinarily extraordinary: otherwise that obedience the people performed to him had been no less than desperate idolatry, as the challenge of the like without like proof and evidence of such favour with God is no better than blasphemy or apostasy. "Hence," saith St. Austin^a,

^a Cum igitur oporteret Dei legem in edictis angelorum terribiliter dari, non uni homini paucisve sapientibus, sed universæ genti et populo ingenti, coram eodem populo magna facta

sunt in monte, ubi lex per unum dabatur, conspiciente multitudine metuenda ac tremenda, quæ fiebant. Non enim populus Israel, sic Moysi credidit, quem admodum suo Lycurgo Lacedæ-

“ the people of Israel did believe Moses’ laws were from God, after another manner than the Lacedæmonians did Lycurgus’ laws were from Apollo. For when the law which enjoins the worship of one God was given unto the people, it did appear (as far forth as the Divine providence did judge sufficient) by strange signs and motions, whereof the people themselves were spectators, that the creature did perform service to the Creator for the giving of that law.” But we must believe, as firmly as this people did Moses, that all the pope’s injunctions are given by God himself, without any other sign or testimony than the Lacedæmonians had, that Lycurgus’ laws were from Apollo. Yet is it here further to be considered, that the Israelites might with far less danger have admitted Moses’ laws than we may the pope’s, without any examination, for Divine, seeing there was no written law of God extant before his time, whereby his writings were to be tried. No such charge had been given this people as he gives most expressly to this purpose: *Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the ordinances and to the laws which I teach you to do, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall put nothing unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye take ought therefrom, that ye may keep the commandment of the Lord your God which I command you*^b. But was the motive or argument by which he sought to establish their belief (or assent unto these commandments) his own infallible authority? No, but their own

monii, quod a Jove seu Apolline leges, quas condidit, accepisset. Cum enim lex dabatur populo, qua coli unus jubebatur Deus, in conspectu ipsius populi, quantum sufficere divina providentia

judicabat, mirabilibus rerum signis ac motibus apparebat, ad eandem legem dandam docentem creatori servire creaturam. Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. 10. cap. 13.

^b Deut. iv. 1, 2.

experience of their truth, as it followeth; *Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed every one from among you: but ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day*^c: so gracious and merciful is our God unto mankind, and so far from exacting this blind obedience which the pope doth challenge, that he would have his written word established in the fresh memory of his mighty wonders wrought upon Pharaoh and all his host. The experiment of their deliverance by Moses had been a strong motive to have persuaded them to admit of his doctrine for infallible, or at the least to have believed him in his particular promises. When the snares of death had compassed them about on every side, and they see no way but one, or rather two inevitable ways to present death and destruction, the Red sea before them, and a mighty host of blood behind them, the one serving as a glass to represent the cruelty of the other; they (as who in their case would not?) *cry out for fear*^d. He that could have foretold their strange deliverance from this imminent danger might have gotten the opinion of a god amongst the heathen; yet Moses confidently promiseth them, even in the midst of this perplexity, the utter destruction of the destroyer whom they feared: *Fear ye not, stand still, and behold the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you this day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen this day, you shall never see again. The Lord shall fight for you, therefore hold you your peace*^e. Notwithstanding all this, Moses never enacts this absolute obedience, to be believed in all that ever he shall say or speak unto them,

The motive
used by
Moses for
establishing
the Israel-
ites' faith.

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^c Ver. 3.
cvi. 10, &c.

^d Exod. xiv. 10.

^e Exod. xiv. 13, 14. Vid. Ps.

without further examination or evident experiment of his doctrine. For God requires not this of any man, no, not of those to whom he spake face to face; always ready to feed such as call upon him with infallible signs and pledges of the truth of his promises. For this reason the waters of Marah^f are sweetened at Moses' prayer. And God upon this new experiment of his power and goodness, takes occasion to reestablish his former covenant, using this semblable event as a further earnest of his sweet promises to them. *If thou wilt diligently hearken, O Israel, unto the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear unto his commandments, and keep all his ordinances, then will I put none of these diseases upon thee, which I brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee*^g. As if he had said, This healing of the bitter waters shall be a token to thee of my power in healing thee. Yet for all this they distrust God's promises for their food, as it followeth, chap. xvi. Nor doth Moses seek to force their assent by fearful anathemas, or sudden destruction, but of some principal offenders herein. For God will not have true faith thunder-blasted in the tender blade, but rather nourished by continuance of such sweet experiments: for this reason he showers down manna from heaven. *I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel: tell them therefore, and say, At evening ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God*^h. For besides the miraculous manner of providing both quails and manna for them, the manner of nourishment by manna did witness the truth of God's word unto them. They had been used to gross and solid meats, such as did fill

Faith must be confirmed by continual experiments answerable to God's word.

^f Exod. xv. 23.^g Ver. 26.^h Exod. xvi. 12.

their stomachs and distend their bellies, whereas manna was in substance slender, but gave strength and vigour to their bodies, and served as an emblem of their spiritual food, which being invisible, yet gave life more excellently than these gross and solid meats did. So saith Mosesⁱ, *Therefore he humbled thee, and made thee hungry, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know it; that he might teach thee that man liveth not by bread only, but every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.*

6. Yet in their distress (so frail is our faith until it be strengthened by continual experiments) they doubt, and tempt the Lord, saying, *Is the Lord amongst us, or no*^k? Nor doth Moses interpose his infallible authority, or charge them to believe him against their experience of their present thirst under pain of eternal damnation, or sufferance of greater thirst in hell; such threats, without better instruction in God's word and the comfort of his Spirit, may bring distrusts or doubts to utter despair, and cause faith to wither where it was well nigh ripe, they never ripen and strengthen any true and lively faith. Moses himself is fain to cry unto the Lord, saying, *What shall I do unto this people? for they be almost ready to stone me.* As the papists would do to the pope, were he to conduct them through the wilderness in such extremity of thirst, able to give them no better assurance of his favour with God than his anathemas, or feed them only with his court holy water, or blessings of wind. But even here again God feeds Israel's faith with waters issuing out of the rock, making themselves eyewitnesses of all his wonders, that so they might believe his words and

ⁱ Deut. viii. 3.^k Exod. xvii. 7.

promises, nay himself, from their own sense and feeling of his goodness, and truth of his word.

7. Though no lawgiver or governor, whether temporal or spiritual, especially whose calling was but ordinary, could possibly before or since so well deserve of the people committed to his guidance, as this great general already had done of all the host of Israel; were they upon this consideration forthwith to believe whatsoever he should avouch, without further examination, sign, or token of his favour with God; without assured experience, or at the least more than probable presumptions, of his continual faithfulness in that service whereunto they knew him appointed? Albeit, after all the mighty works before mentioned, wrought in their presence, they had been bound thereunto, the meanest handmaid¹ in that multitude had infallible pledges plenty of his extraordinary calling, locked up in her own unerring senses. But from the strange yet frequent manifestation of Moses' power and favour with God, so great as none, besides the great Prophet whom he prefigured, might challenge the like, the Lord in his all-seeing wisdom took fit occasion to allure his people unto strict observance of what he afterwards^m solemnly enacted, as also in them to forewarn all future generations, without express warrant of his word, not absolutely to believe any governor whomsoever in all, though of tried skill and fidelity in many principal points of his service. That passage of scripture wherein the manner of this people's stipulation is registered, well deserves an exact survey of all, especially of these circumstances; How the Lord, by rehearsal of his mighty works forepassed, extorts their promise to do

God in the establishing of Moses' authority gave a caveat to future generations for avoiding blind obedience.

¹ The Hebrews have a common saying, *Ancilla plus vidit ad mare Rubrum, et montem Si-*

nai quam viderint omnes prophetæ. Fagius in 5. Deut.

^m Deut. xiii. 1, &c.

whatsoever should by Moses be commanded them, and yet will not accept it offered, until he have made them earwitnesses of his familiarity and communication with him. First, out of the mount he called Moses unto him to deliver this solemn message unto the house of Jacob; *Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you upon eagles' wings, and have brought you unto me. Now therefore, if you will hear my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be my chief treasure above all people, though all the earth be mine*ⁿ. After Moses had reported unto God this answer, freely uttered with joint consent of all the people solemnly assembled^o before their elders, (*All that the Lord commanded we will do*^p.) was the whole business betwixt God and them fully transacted by this agent in their absence? No, he is sent back to sanctify the people, that they might expect God's glorious appearance in mount Sinai, to ratify what he had said upon the return of their answer, *Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear whilst I talk with thee, and that they may also believe thee for ever*^q. They did not believe that God had revealed his word to Moses for the wonders he had wrought, but rather that his wonders were from God, because they heard God speak to him, yea, to themselves. For their principal and fundamental laws were uttered by God himself in their hearing, as Moses expresseth; *These words* (to wit the Decalogue) *the Lord spake unto all your multitude in the mount out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the darkness, with a great voice; and added no more*^r. And lest the words which

ⁿ Exod. xix. 4—6.

^o Ver. 7.

^p Ver. 8.

^q Ver. 9.

^r Deut. v. 22. Vide annot. ad 5. paragr. of this chap. ex S. August.

they had heard might soon be smothered in fleshly hearts, or quickly slide out of their brittle memories, the Lord wrote them in two tables of stone, and at their transcription, not Moses only, but Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, with the seventy elders of Israel, are made spectators of the Divine glory, ravished with the sweetness of his presence. *They saw*, saith the text^s, *the God of Israel: and under his feet as it were a work of a sapphire stone, and as the very heaven when it is clear. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.* After these tables, through Moses' anger at the people's folly and impiety, were broken, God writes the same words again^t, and renews his covenant^u before all the people, promising undoubted experience of his Divine assistance.

8. Doth Moses after all this call fire from heaven upon all such as distrust his words? Aaron and Miriam openly derogate from his authority, which the Lord confirms again *viva voce*, descending in the *pillar of the cloud*^v, conventing these detractors in the door of the tabernacle; *Wherefore were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? Thus the Lord was very angry, and departed*^v, leaving his mark upon Miriam, cured of her leprosy by Moses' instant prayers. No marvel if Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's judgments were so grievous, when their sin against Moses, after so many documents of his high calling could not but be wilful; as their perseverance in it, after so many admonitions to desist, most malicious and obstinate. Yet was Moses further countenanced by the appearance of God's glory *unto all the congregation*^x, and

^s Exod. xxiv. 1. 9—11.

^t Exod. xxxiv. 1.

^u Ver. 10, 11.

^v Num. xii. 5, 6, 8, 9.

^x Num. xvi. 19.

his authority further ratified by the strange and fearful end of these chief malefactors^y, (foretold by him^z,) and by fire, issuing from the Lord to consume their confederates, in offering incense ungrateful to their God. *Tantæ molis erat Judæam condere gentem!* “So long and great a work it was to edify Israel in true faith!” But without any like miracle or prediction, such as never saw him, never heard good of him, must believe the pope as well as Israel did their lawgiver, that could make the sea to grant him passage, the clouds send bread, the winds bring flesh, and the hard rock yield drink sufficient for him and all his mighty host; that could thus call the heavens as witnesses to condemn, and appoint the earth as executioner of his judgments upon the obstinate and rebellious; yet after this he inflicts no such punishments upon the doubtful in faith as the Romish church doth, but rather (as is evident out of the places before alleged^a) confirms them by commemoration of these late cited 479 and like experiments, making God’s favours^b past the surest pledges of his assistance in greatest difficulties that could beset them. To conclude, this people believed Moses for God’s testimony of him, we may not believe God’s word without the pope’s testimony of it. He must be to God as Aaron was to Moses, his mouth, whereby he only speaks distinctly or intelligibly to his people.

^y Ver. 33.

^z Ver. 27, 28.

^a Deut. iv.

^b Deut. vii. 17—19. *If thou say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I cast them out? thou shalt not fear them: but remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh,*

and unto all Egypt; the great temptation which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and wonders, and the mighty hand, and stretched out arm, whereby the Lord thy God brought thee out: so shall the Lord thy God do unto all the people whose face thou fearest.

CHAP. XVII.

That the Church's Authority was no Part of the Rule of Faith unto the People after Moses' Death: that by Experiments answerable to his Precepts and Predictions, the Faithful, without relying upon the Priest's infallible Proposals, were as certain, both of the Divine Truth, and true Meaning of the Law, as their Forefathers had been that lived with Moses and saw his Miracles.

1. To proceed unto the ages following Moses; how did they know Moses' law, either indeed to be God's word, or the true sense and meaning of it, being indefinitely known for such? by tradition? Yes. By tradition only? No. But how at all by tradition? as by a joint part of that rule on which they were finally to rely? Rather it was a mean to bring them unto the due consideration or right application of the written rule, which Moses had left them. So hard were their hearts with whom this great lawgiver had first to deal, that faith could not take root in them, unless first wrought and subacted by extraordinary signs and wonders; but once thus created in them, the incorruptible seed thereof might, by means ordinary, easily be propagated unto posterity, with whom it was to grow up and ripen, not by bare credence to their ancestors' traditions, nor by such miraculous sights as they had seen, but by assiduous and serious observation of God's providence in their own times. For all his ways, to such as mark them, are ever parallel to some one or other rule contained in this book of life. The Israelites in every age might have discerned the truth of his threats or promises, always fulfilled according to the diversity of their ways, though thus much the best amongst them would seldom have observed, perhaps not so much as once have compared their

How far the traditions, exhortations, or instructions of parents, did stead their children for establishing of faith.

course of life with either part of God's covenant of life and death, unless thus forewarned by their ancestors. The tradition then of former, was of like use for begetting true belief in latter generations, as the exhortations of tutors, who have already tasted the sweet of Helicon, are unto their pupils for attaining true knowledge in good arts, of whose pleasantness they never conceive aright, until they taste it in themselves, though
480 taste it, but upon the other's commendation, they would not, without their direction (ordinarily) they could not.

2. This method Moses himself prescribes; *Consider this day: for I speak not unto your children which neither have known nor seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm, and his signs, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and all his land^c. For your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did. Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it^d. God's wonders past they were to consider—to what end? That they might lay up their lawgiver's words in their hearts and in their souls, bind them as remembrances upon their hands, that they might be as frontlets between their eyes^e, or sights whereby to level their steps, lest they trod awry. God's word so rooted in the fathers, as thus to fructify in their carriage, gesture, speech, and action, the seed of it was to be sown in the tender and supple hearts of children, as Moses in the next words adds; *And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.**

^c Deut. xi. 2, 3.^d Ver. 7, 8.^e Ver. 18.

*And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and upon thy gates^f. Thus was God's covenant with his people, first, briefly drawn in signs and wonders, and uttered by a mighty voice in mount Horeb, as it had been a *demise parole*; afterwards, conceived in more ample sort, and written in more special terms by Moses, but was to be sealed to every generation by their sure experience of God's mercy and justice; the one infallibly accomplishing their prosperity for obeying, the other their calamities for transgressing it, as in the same place followeth: *For if ye keep diligently all these commandments which I command you to do, (that is,) to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; then will the Lord cast out all these nations before you, and ye shall possess great nations mightier than you. All the places whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: your coast shall be from the wilderness and from Lebanon, and from the river, even the river Perah, unto the uttermost sea. No man shall stand against you: for the Lord shall cast the fear of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you^g.**

3. Every light or formal observation of this covenant sufficeth not to avert God's threats, or make them capable of those bounteous promises which he never failed to fulfil, as long as in heart and deed they used Moses' writings for their rule, not weighing the foolish traditions of the elders; *When he slew them, (saith the Psalmist^h,) they sought him: and they returned and sought God early. And they remembered that God was their strength, and the most high God their redeemer.* Proportionally to their repentance (but

^f Vers. 19, 20.^g Deut. xi. 22—25.^h Ps. lxxviii. 34, 35.

far above, or rather without all proportion of deserts) did the Lord deal with them. For, as *their hearts* (though in some sort turned unto him) *were not upright with him, neither were they faithful in his covenant: so he being merciful, thus far forgave their iniquity, that he destroyed them not, but oftentimes called back his anger, and suffered not his whole displeasure to arise.*

- 481 4. The whole historical part of the Old Testament until David's time, (epitomized by this Psalmist,) witnesseth what way soever this people went, either the blessing or the curse which Moses there sets before them, did always surely meet them: *Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; the blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: and the curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known*ⁱ. In these terms of blessings and cursings he instyles the former disjunctive covenant: *If ye shall hearken therefore to my commandments which I shall command you this day, that you love the Lord your God, and serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, I also will give rain unto your land in due time, the first rain and the latter, that thou mayest gather in thy wheat, and thy wine, and thine oil. Also I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and have enough. But beware lest your heart deceive you, and lest ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; and so the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that your land yield not her fruit; and ye perish quickly from the*

ⁱ Deut. xi. 26—28.

good land which the Lord giveth you^k. To stir them up to more strict observance of the former covenant, the blessings and cursings here mentioned were to be pronounced with great solemnity at their first entrance into the land of Canaan: When the Lord thy God therefore hath brought thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, then shalt thou put the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal^l. And elsewhere Moses chargeth the people, saying, These (all sons of the free-woman) shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye pass over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin: and these (sons of the bondwoman) shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulon, Dan, and Nephtali. And the Levites shall answer and say unto all the men of Israel, with a loud voice, Cursed &c.^m Nor was this rehearsal more strictly enjoined by Moses than faithfully performed by Joshua; And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests of the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that is born in the country; half of them were over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the children of Israel. Then afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded, that Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, as well before the women and chil-

^k Deut. xi. 13—17.^l Deut. xi. 29.^m Deut. xxvii. 11—14.

dren, as the stranger that was conversant among themⁿ. The like solemnity was to be continued every seventh year, as Moses commanded them, saying, Every seventh year, when the year of freedom shall be, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel shall come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel, that they may hear it. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and keep and observe all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known it, may hear it, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it^o.

482 5. Children were to be instructed, first privately, then publicly, that the solemnity of the spectacle might work in them a modest fear and reverence, without whose precedent impression true faith hardly finds entrance into the heart of man. And without miracles it seldom takes, but where the seeds of it have been sown in tender years; nor doth it usually sink into younger breasts, unless sucked in with admiration. All that Moses, all that Joshua, all that priests and Levites, all that parents, or other instructors private or public, could do to such, all they aimed at, was to propose the infallible word in such sort, as might stir up their hearts to receive it with attention and admiration, and afterwards to make sure trial of it (always sufficient to prove itself) by their practice. No instructor in that people ever taught his hearers, either finally or jointly, to rely upon the infallibility of his proposals.

ⁿ Josh. viii. 33—35.

^o Deut. xxxi. 10—13.

The Israelites' care to instruct their children in the precepts of the law necessary unto Christians, seeing faith seldom grows without miracles, unless planted in tender years.

6. But the Jesuit's heart, though his mouth will not utter it, thus indicts : Did all this stir these scripturians would seem to make, or tattling parents' daily invitation of their children to strict observance of this rule, take such effect as Moses dreamed of in posterity? No. But the reason why it did not, was because they sought not in time to supply the defect or rarity of miracles in later, with more frequent and solemn memorial of such as had happened in former ages, or with more abundant meditation upon their written law, and diligent observation of their ordinary success, always correspondent thereunto. *Take heed to thyself, saith Moses, and keep thy soul diligently, that thou forget not the things thine eyes have seen, and that they depart not out of thine heart all the days of thy life : but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons. Forget not the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will cause them to hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children^p.* The necessity of this and like premonitions was too well manifested by the event. *The people* (saith another penman of the sacred canon^q) *had served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, which had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel.* Not the avouchment or presence of infallible teachers, but their sure experience of God's power and mercy, did more surely fasten this people's assent unto the truth of that which Moses had left written, than Moses' live-personal proposal could do their fathers, to his words uttered in their audience. *But after that generation* (with whom Joshua had

^p Deut. iv. 9, &c.

^q Judg. ii. 7, 8.

conversed) *was gathered unto their fathers: and another generation arose after them, which neither knew the Lord, nor yet the works he had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did wickedly in the sight of the Lord, and served Baal*^r. Whence it came to pass, that *whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was sore against them, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: so he punished them sore*^s. Notwithstanding, *the Lord raised up judges which delivered them out of the hands of their oppressors: yet when the judge was dead, they returned, and did worse than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and worship them; they ceased not from their own inventions, nor from their rebellious way*^t. What rule then was left to reclaim them? the infallible proposals of their priests? Though these, or an angel from heaven should have proposed any other
 483 doctrine than what was consonant to their written law, (whose true meaning in this respect every one of them should have known,) Moses' curse before mentioned had overtaken them following it. So much were they addicted unto Baal's priests' proposals, that angels could scarcely be heard, though suggesting nothing but what their lawgiver had taught, though assuring them by their presence of such assistance from their mighty God as he had promised. Thus when the general of these heavenly soldiers sought to encourage Gideon, *The Lord is with thee, thou valiant man*: he replies; *Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this come upon us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, and said, Did not the Lord bring us out of Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hand*

Of Gideon's distrust, and the means how his faith was established.

^r Judg. ii. 10, 11.

^s Ver. 15, 16.

^t Ver. 19.

of the *Midianites*^u. As if he had said, I will not deny but the Lord hath done of old as our fathers have declared unto us; Moses' story I distrust not, but am sure he hath dealt far otherwise with us.

7. But doth this defect of faith in him convince the law of imperfection? rather the object of his distrust might have taught him to have believed the perfection of Moses' law, which had so often forewarned them of such oppression by their enemies, when they forsook the God of their fathers. These forewarnings had Gideon believed aright, he had not distrusted the angel's exhortation. What was the reason then of his misbelieving, or rather overseeing that part of the law? Not ignorance of God's word in general; for the miracles related by Moses he had in perfect memory. What then? Want of sufficient authority to propose unto him these particular revelations, or their true meaning? This is all the Romanist can pretend. Yet what greater authority could he require than that angel had which spake unto Gideon? Our apostle supposeth any angel's proposal of Divine doctrines to be at the least equivalent to apostolical, *Though we*, saith he^x, (whether Paul or Cephas,) *or* (which he supposeth to be more) *an angel from heaven, preach unto you otherwise than we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*. Or if we respect not only the personal authority of the proposer, but with it the manner of proposing God's word; what proposal can we imagine more effectual than this great Angel of the covenant's reply unto Gideon's distrustful answer: *And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel out of the hands of the Midianites: have I not sent thee?*

8. Whether Gideon's diffidence after all this were a

^u Judg. vi. 13.

^x Gal. i. 8.

^y Judg. vi. 14.

sin, I leave it to be disputed by the Jesuits. A defect or dulness no doubt it was, and only in respect of the like in us they hold a necessity of the visible church's infallibility; unto whose sentence whosoever fully accords not, is by their positions uncapable of all other infallible means of Divine faith. To pretend doubt or distrust of God's word once proposed by it, yea, to seek further satisfaction or resolution of doubts than it shall vouchsafe to give, is more than a sin, extreme impiety. Yet had this great angel stood upon his authority in such peremptory terms, Gideon had died in his distrust. For after a second reply made by Gideon, *Oh my Lord, whereby shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house*^z. And a further promise of the angel's assistance not like the former, *Have I not sent thee? but I will therefore be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.* He yet prefers this petition; *I pray thee if I have found favour in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me: depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring mine offering, and lay it before thee.* After he had by more evident documents fully perceived it was an angel of the Lord that had parlied with him all this time, erecting his dejected heart with these comfortable words, *Peace be with thee; fear not: thou shalt not die*: he yet demands two other signs before he adventures upon the angel's word. But after it is once confirmed unto him by experience of his power, in keeping his fleece dry in the middle of moisture, and moistening it where was nothing but dryness about it; he is more confident upon a soldier's dream, than a Jesuit in like case would be upon the pope's sentence or blessing given *ex cathedra*. *When*

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^z Judg. vi. 15.

Gideon heard the dream told, and the interpretation of the same, he worshipped, and returned to the host of Israel, and said, Up; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian^a.

9. Nor he nor his people could at any time have wanted like assurance of God's might and deliverances, had they, according to the rule which Moses set them, turned unto him with all their heart, and with all their soul; but as far were they as the papists from admitting his words for their rule of faith. The unwritten traditions of Baal were (at the least) of equal, or joint authority with his writings, and in deed and action, though not in word and profession, preferred before them. Longer than their assent was (by such miraculous victories as Gideon had now gotten over the Midianites) as it were tied and fastened to the blessings and cursings of Moses' law, this stiffnecked generation did neither cleave to it nor to their God; *But when Gideon was dead, they turned away, and went a whoring after Baalam, and made Baal-berith their god, and remembered not the Lord their God, which had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side^b.* Miracles after the law given were usually either tokens of precedent unbelief, or for signs to unbelievers, serving especially to put them in mind of what Moses had foretold: the attentive consideration of whose predictions wrought greater faith and confidency in such as without miracles laid this law in their hearts, than this people conceived upon the fresh memory of Gideon's extraordinary signs and glorious victory.

10. The like occasions of such distrust as were observed in Gideon were frequent in those times wherein the four and fourtieth Psalm was written, yet

The people's experience of such calamities as Mo-

^a Judg. vii. 15.

^b Judg. viii. 33.

ses threatened, was their surest ground of such joyful hopes as he had promised.

the author of it is not so daunted with the oppression of his people as Gideon was. The manifestation of such reproach, contempt, and scorn, as Moses said should befall them, did always animate such as indeed had used the law as a perpetual rule to notify the diversity of all success, good or bad, by the degrees of their declining from it, or approach unto it. The greater calamities they suffered, the more undoubted experience they had of Divine truth contained in Mosaiscal threats, the more undoubted their experience of their truth, upon consciousness of their own transgressions; the greater motives they had upon sincere and hearty repentance, to apprehend the stability of his sweetest promises for their good. No depression of this people, but served as a countersway to accelerate, 485 intend, or enlarge the measure of their wonted exaltation, so long as they rightly weighed all their actions and proceedings in Moses' balances, equalizing their permanent sorrow for sins past, unto their wonted delight in transient pleasures.

11. Thus when Jeremy more admired than distrusted God's mercies, in tendering the purchase of his kinsman's field to him, close prisoner for denouncing the whole desolation of his country, when the kings and princes of Judah had no assurance of so much possession in the promised land, as to inherit the sepulchres of their fathers; the Lord expels not his suspensive rather than diffident admiration with signs and wonders, as he had done Gideon's doubt, or his stiffnecked forefathers' distrust. By what means then? By the present calamities which had seized upon the cities of Judah, and that very place wherein his late purchased inheritance lay. When he cast these and the like doubts in his mind, *Behold the mounts, they are come into the city to take it; and the city is given*

into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, by means of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy unto thee the field for silver, and take witnesses; for the city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the Lord God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me^c? The Lord had stricken Jacob with the wound of an enemy, and with a sharp chastisement, for the multitude of his iniquities, wherefore he cried for his affliction, and said, My sorrow is incurable^d, not considering who it was had done all this unto him: for because the Lord had killed, they must believe he would make alive again. Their present wounds, inflicted contrary to the rules of politic defence, were the best pledges of their future health, beyond all hope of state chirurgeons. And this is the very seal of Jeremiah's assurance, from the Lord's own mouth: Thus saith the Lord; Like as I have brought all this great plague upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good I have promised them. And the fields shall be possessed in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; and shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for silver, and make writings, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and round about Jerusalem^e. So absolute and all-sufficient was Moses his law in particular actions, much more in general or doctrinal resolutions, that God himself, for confirmation of his prophets' and this distrustful people's faith, in a point by human estimate most incredi-

^c Jer. xxxii. 24, 25, &c.
42, 43, &c.

^d Jer. xxx. 13, 14.

^e Jer. xxxii.

ble, thought it sufficient to be a remembrancer to the lawgiver. For the Lord here saith to Jeremiah concerning this particular Moses many generations before had universally foretold, *Now when all these things shall come upon thee, either the blessing or the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt turn into thine heart among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee; then the Lord thy God will cause thy captives to return, and have compassion upon thee, and will return to gather thee out of all the people, where the Lord thy God had scattered thee. Though thou wast cast unto the uttermost part of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he take thee: and the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will shew thee favour, and will multiply thee above* 486 *thy fathers*^f. By this rule of Moses, according to the prediction of Jeremiah, doth Nehemiah afterwards frame his prayers to God, and direct his enterprise for restauration of Jerusalem: *We have grievously sinned against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses. I beseech thee, remember the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, Ye will transgress, and I will scatter you abroad among the people: but if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though your scattering were to the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather you from thence, and will bring you unto the place that I have chosen to place my name there. Now these are thy servants and thy people, &c.—O Lord, I beseech thee, let thine ear now hearken to the prayer of thy servants, who de-*

^f Deut. xxx. 1, &c.

sire to fear thy name: and I pray thee, cause thy servant to prosper this day, and give him favour in the presence of this man^g. He saw the truth of Moses' Divine prediction confirmed by the king's present grant of his petition, and speedy restauration of Jerusalem, albeit a prophet by profession had dissuaded the enterprise, as likely to prove dangerous to his person^h.

CHAP. XVIII.

That the Society or visible Company of Prophets had no such absolute Authority as the Romish Church usurps.

1. DID the records of antiquity afford us any the least presumption to think, that absolute belief or obedience might safely be tendered by inferiors, as due to any visible company of men, without examination of their proposals by Moses' writings, since they were extant, the society of prophets, in all respects the Romanists can pretend, had the most probable title to this prerogative. Their profession or calling was public and lawful; their distinction from all others, eminent; their persons and places of residence, visible and known; their promises for enjoying the extraordinary presence or illuminations of God's Spirit, peculiar: many of them venerable for their integrity in civil dealings, and sanctity of private life; some of them endued with the gift of miracles: in all these and many like considerations, that fraternity or collegiate society might justly have pleaded all the privileges a public spirit can grant to one sort of men before others. For if the more or less express testimony of God's word for extraordinary assistance of his Spirit, or the different measure of his illumination, or manner of immediate teaching, be that which makes some men's spirit more public than their brethren's; this difference was greater

That the company of prophets had as great privilege as any justly can challenge.

^g Nehem. i. 7.

^h Nehem. vi. 10, 11.

That the people were not bound to believe what a major part of prophets determined without examination.

between the priests or prophets and people of old, than since God spake unto the world by his Son: yet what prophet did once intimate the necessity of his proposal for notifying the truth of scriptures? What one did ever bewray the least desire to have his interpretations of them universally held authentic? or his particular predictions absolutely assented unto, without further trial than his bare assertion, without examination of them by Moses' doctrine already established?

487 2. Had they been the infallible church representative, had their assertions, though given by joint consent *ex cathedra*, or in the most solemn manner used in those times, been of such authority as the Romanist would persuade us a council of their prelates lawfully assembled is, God's people had stood bound to embrace whatsoever a major part of that profession had resolved upon: but this inference, though necessarily following the supposed premises, the Jesuit, I know, dare not affirm, lest Ahab's blood, untimely shed by confidence in their infallibility, cry out against him. Yet Bellarmineⁱ too well knowing the liquorish temper of this present age, (for the most part acquainted with

ⁱ De Eccles. Milit. l. 3. c. 17. Ad primum dico illos 400 prophetas manifeste fuisse pseudo-prophetas, neque id ignorasse vel ipsum Achab, qui eos consulabat. Nam ibidem cum diceret rex Jehosaphat: *Non est hic aliquis propheta Domini per quem interrogemus Dominum?* Respondet Achab; *Remansit unus, sed ego odi eum, quia non prophetat mihi nisi malum.* Certe si quis nunc in media Saxonia consuleret 400 ministros Lutheranos de fide justificante, et postea unum catholicum, non esset mirum, si major pars erraret.

Et sicut nunc non sequitur, totam ecclesiam errare, etiam si errarent 400 ministri Lutherani, quia præter Saxoniam et vicina quædam loca, sunt alia multa, ubi vera fides prædicatur, ita non sequitur, omnes doctores Judæorum tempore Achab errasse, etiamsi erraverint 400 prophetæ, qui in Samaria erant. Nam præter eos prophetas erant in Judæa multi alii prophetæ, et (quod potissimum est) erant sacerdotes in Jerusalem, quibus ex officio incumberebat respondere ad consulta de lege Domini.

none but tabletalk divinity,) to be such as will swallow down any doctrine, be it never so idle, profane, or poisonous, so it be sauced with pleasant conceit and merriment, would put us off with this jest: That as in Saxony one catholic's verdict were to be taken before four hundred Lutherans'; so should one of the Lord's prophets have been followed in those times, before five hundred of Baal's. And Ahab no doubt had so done, had not the Devil taught his divines then, as he hath done Bellarmine and his fellows since, to take universality as a sure note of the church, traditions and customs of the elders for the rule of faith, and (which is the undoubted conclusion of such premises) to follow a multitude to any mischief. So mightily did the opinion of a major part, being all men of the same profession, sway with the superstitious people of those times, that Ahab's pursuivant conceived hope of seducing Micaiah whilst they were on the way together, by intimating such censures of schism, of heresy, of peevishness, or privacy of spirit, as the false catholic bestows on us, likely to befall him, if he should vary from the rest^k. The best answer (I think) a Roman catechism could afford, would be to repeat the conclusion which Bellarmine would have maintained: "All the rest besides were Baal's prophets." They were, indeed, in such a sense as Jesuits and all seducers are; but not by public profession or solemn subscription to his rites, as may partly appear by Jehoshaphat's continuing his resolution to go up to battle against Micaiah's counsel, which questionless he would rather have died at home than done, had he known Micaiah only to have belonged unto the Lord, and all his adversaries unto Baal; partly, by that reverent conceit which even the chief of these seducers entertained at that time of Elias,

Ahab's false prophets were not professed servers of Baal.

^k 1 Kings xxii. 13.

whose utter disgrace Baal's servants would by all means have sought, for his late designs acted upon their fellows: yet, as Josephus¹ records, the chief argument used by Zidkiah to diminish Micaiah's credit with both kings, was an appearance of contradiction betwixt his and Eliah's prediction of Ahab's death, the accomplishment of both being apprehended as impossible, less credit (as he urged) was to be given to Micaiah, because so impudent as openly to contradict so
 488 great a prophet of the Lord as Elias, at whose threatenings Ahab king of Israel trembled, humbling himself with fasting, clothed in sackcloth. And is it likely he would so shortly after entertain the professed servants of Baal for his counsellors? Yet seeing the event hath openly condemned them for seducers, and none are left to plead their cause, it is an easy matter for the Jesuit or others to say, they were Baal's prophets by profession. But were not most priests and prophets in Judah and Benjamin usually such? Yes, and (as afterwards shall appear) did band as strongly with as joint consent against Jeremy and Ezekiel, as these did against Micaiah. The point wherein we desire resolution is, by what rule of Romish catholic divinity truth in those times might have been discerned from falsehood, before God's judgments did light upon the city and temple. He is more blind than the blindest Jew that ever breathed, who cannot see how such

¹ Antiq. l. 8. c. 10. Interea Sedecias quidam unus e pseudo-prophetis in medium progreditur, negans curandum quid Micaheus garriat, nihil enim veri eum prædicere, argumento esse prædictionem Eliæ, qui sine dubio melius quam iste futura cerneret. Illum enim prædixisse apud Jezraelem in Nabuthi sub-

urbano lambendum a canibus regis sanguinem, quemadmodum lambuissent cruorem Nabuthi opera ipsius lapidati a populo. Perspicuum igitur esse eum mentiri, qui longe præstantiori prophetæ non vereatur contrarium dicere, quod periturus sit rex abhinc die tertia, &c.

as professed themselves priests and prophets of the Lord, as well in Judah as in Israel, did bewitch the people with the selfsame spells the papist boasts of to this day, as the best prop of his catholic faith. Yet such is the hypocrisy of these proud Pharisees, that they can say in their hearts, Oh, had we lived in the days of Jezebel, we would not have been her inquisitors against such prophets as Elias and Micaiah were: whenas in truth Jezebel's impiety towards them was clemency in respect of Romish cruelty against God's saints, her witchcrafts but as venial sins, if we compare them with Jesuitical sorceries. But of this error more directly in the chapter following; of their sorceries and impieties hereafter.

3. Unto our former demand, Whether the society of prophets were the church representative; whether the people were bound without examination to believe whatsoever was by a major part, or such of that profession as were in highest or most public place, determined—what answer a learned papist would give, I cannot tell. Than this following, better cannot be imagined on their behalf: That this supreme authority which they contend for was in the true prophets only; that they, albeit inspired with Divine illuminations, and endued with such authority as the Jesuit makes the pope's, *humana divinitas inspirata*, did notwithstanding permit their declarations, for the hardness of this people's heart, to be tried by the event or examined by the law, not that they wanted lawful power (would they have stood upon their authority) to exact belief without delay; seeing readiness to believe the truth proposed is always commended in the sacred story. And no doubt but the people did well in admitting the true prophets' doctrine before the false at the first proposal; the sooner the better. But were they

therefore to believe the true prophets absolutely without examination? Why should they then believe one of that profession before another, seeing seducers could propose their conceits with as great speed and peremptoriness as the best? Nor did reason only dissuade, but the law of God^m also expressly forbid that people, always and in all causes to trust such as upon trial had been found to divine aright of strange events. Yet grant we must, that hardness of heart made this people more backward than otherwise they would have been to believe truths proposed; that oftentimes they required signs from their prophet, when obedience was instantly due from them to him; that oftentimes they sinned in
 489 not assenting immediately, without interposition of time for trial, or respite to resolve upon what terms belief might be tendered. Thus much we may grant with this limitation; “if we consider them absolutely, or so well disposed as they should and might have been, not as the prophets found them.” For in men inwardly ill affected or unqualified for true faith, credulity comes nearer the nature of vice than virtue, a disposition of disloyalty, a degree of heresy or infidelity, rather than a preparation to sincere obedience, or any sure foundation of true and lively faith. Assent, perchance, men so affected may, more readily than others would, unto sundry Divine truths; yet not truly, not as they are Divine, and consonant to the rule of goodness, but by accident, inasmuch as they in part consort with some one or other of their affections. And the more forward men are upon such grounds to believe some generalities of Christian duties, the more prone they prove, when opportunity tempts them, to oppugn others more principal, and more specially concerning their salvation. For credulity, if it spring not out of

In what cases and persons proneness to believe particular truths is commendable, in what or in whom suspicious.

^m Deut. xiii. 1.

an honest disposition, uniformly inclining unto goodness as such, but from some unbridled humour or predominant natural affection, will always sway more unto some mischief than unto any thing that is good. *Many believed in Jesus*, (saith St. Johnⁿ,) *when they saw his miracles*. It pleased them well he had turned water into wine. That he had given other proofs of his power in driving buyers and sellers out of the temple, did minister hope unto proud hearts he might prove such a Messiah as they expected; as elsewhere upon the like occasion they said, *This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world*^o. The ground of this their aptness to believe thus much (as is intimated in the words following) was, their inordinate desire of having an earthly king that might rule the nation with an iron rod. *When Jesus therefore perceived*, by their forwardness to profess the former truth, *that they would come and take him to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone*^p; for the same cause no doubt which the evangelist specifies in the former place; *But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew them all, and had no need that any should testify of man*^q. He knew such as upon these glimpses of his glory were presently so stiffly set to believe in him, upon hopes of being fed with dainties, or mighty protection against the heathen, would be as violently bent against him, even to crucify him for a seducer, after they had discovered his constant endeavours to bring them, both by life and doctrine, unto conformity with his cross, mortification, humility, contempt of the world, patience in affliction, with other like qualities despicable in the world's eyes, yet main principles in his school, and

ⁿ John ii. 23.^o vi. 14.^p vi. 15.^q ii. 24, 25.

elementary grounds of salvation ; so his countrymen of Nazareth suddenly admiring *the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*^r, after he begun to upbraid them with unthankfulness, as speedily attempt to throw him headlong from the top of the hill whereon their city was built. By this it may appear, that of the Jewish people in ancient times, some did sin in being backward ; others, in an immature forwardness to believe prophetical doctrines. But the fountains or first heads whence these swift motions of life were depraved in the one, was inordinate affection, or intrinsic habitual corruption ; the root whence such deadness 490 was derived into the actions of the other was hardness of heart, precedent neglect of God's word, and ignorance of his ways thence ensuing. Which presupposed, the parties so affected did not amiss^s in not believing the true prophets without examination, but in not abandoning such dispositions as disabled them for believing all parts of truth proposed with constancy and uniformity, making them fit instruments to be wrought upon by seducers. Hence saith our Saviour, *I come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not : if another shall come in his own name, him will ye receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh of God alone*^t ? Nor prophetical, nor apostolical, nor messiacal, much less could papal authority make them believe the doctrine of life, entirely and sincerely, whilst their hearts were hardened ; whose hardness, though, might easily have been mollified, by laying Moses' law unto them while they were young and tender.

^r Luke iv. 22. 28, 29.

^s Bellarmine grants that he which doubts of the pope's absolute authority doth not amiss

to examine it, albeit he sin in doubting of it. See the notes, cap. 1. §. 10. and cap. 24. §. 3.

^t John v. 43, 44.

4. It is a rule as profitable for our own information in many points, as for refutation of the adversary, that the commendation of necessary means is always included in the commendation of the end; which how good or excellent soever it be, our desires of it are preposterous, all earnest endeavours to attain it turbulent, unless first addressed with proportionable alacrity to follow the means that must produce it. Sober spirits always bound their hopes of accomplishing the one, by perfect survey of their interest in the other; as minds truly liberal determine future expenses by exact calculation of their present revenues. Even in businesses of greatest importance, though requiring speediest expedition, a wise man will moderate his pace according to the quality of the ground whereon he goes, otherwise the more haste may cause worse speed. The Jews were, as we are, bound to believe truths proposed without delay: but both, for this reason, most strictly bound to a continual uniformity of practising Divine precepts already known, without dispensing with this or that particular, though offensive to our present disposition; without indulgence to this or that special time, without all privilege sought from the pleasure or displeasure of men; both bound so to frame our lives and conversations as to be instantly able to discern the truth proposed, not by relying upon their authority that propose it, but for itself, or from a full and lively, though a quick and speedy apprehension of immediate homogeneal consonancy between the external and the internal word. For if any part of God's word truly dwell in us, though secret it may be and silent of itself, yet will it echo in our hearts, whilst the like reverberates in our ears from the live voice of the ministry. Thus, had the Jews' hearts been truly set to Moses' law, had their souls delighted in the practice of

A rule for the right settling of our persuasions in divine matters, or ripening of true faith.

it as in their food, they had resounded to the prophet's call, as a string, though untouched, and unable to begin motion of itself, will yet raise itself to an unison voice, or as the fowls of heaven answer with like language to others of their own kind that have better occasion to begin the cry. In this sense are Christ's sheep said to hear his voice, and follow him; not every one that can counterfeit his or his prophet's call.

- 491 5. The issue of all that hath been said is, that none within the precincts of these times whereof we now treat, from the law given unto the gospel, were bound to believe God's messengers, without examination of their doctrine by the precedent written word. Only this difference there was; such as had rightly framed their hearts to it, did make this trial of prophetic doctrines, as it were, by a present taste, which others could not without interposition of time, to work an alteration in their distempered affections. For this reason do the prophets always annex Mosaical precepts of repentance to their predictions of future events, as knowing that if their hearts to whom they spake were turned to God, their sight should forthwith be restored clearly to discern the truth. For further manifestation of the same conclusion, it appears sufficiently, from sundry discourses in the former book, that Israel's incredulity unto their prophets was finally to be resolved into their neglect, their imperfect, or partial observance of Moses' precepts. Wherefore not the live voice of them, whose words in themselves were most infallible, (and are by the approbation of time, with other conspicuous documents of God's peculiar providence preserving them in Divine estimation so long, become an undoubted rule of life unto us,) but the written word before, confirmed by signs and wonders, sealed by the events of times present and prece-

Why the prophets enjoin repentance whilst they foretell events to come.

dent, was the infallible rule, whereby the prophetic admonitions of every age were to be tried and examined.

6. The words of the best, while they spake them, were not of like authority, as now written they are unto us, nor were they admitted into the canon, but upon just proof of their Divine authority. That one speech which Esay uttered was an axiom so well known, as might bring all the rest to be examined before admission; *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*^u. For God's will, already known and manifested to the people's consciences, was to overway the contrary proposals of known prophets, though never so peremptory. Nor was it impossible for prophets to avouch their own conceits under the name of Divine revelations, more immediately sent from God, than the pope pretends; witness the man of God that went from Judah to Bethel^x, seduced by his fellow-prophet's feigned revelation from an angel, counselling him to divert into his house, contrary to the Lord's commandment given before. The one's dealing was, I confess, most unusual; so was the other's death; yet a lively document to cause all that should hear of it, until the world's end, take heed of dispensing with the word of the Lord, once made known unto themselves, upon belief of more manifest revelations or instructions, by what means soever given to others, either for recalling or restraining it. Hence may the reader descry, as well the height of our adversaries' folly as the depth of their impiety, making their church's authority (which by their own acknowledgment cannot add more books to the number of the canon already finished, but only judge

^u Isaiah viii. 20.

^x 1 Kings xiii. 18.

which are canonical, which not) far greater than theirs was that did preach and write these very books, which both we and they acknowledge for canonical. For the prophet's words were no rule of faith, until examined and tried by the written word precedent, or approved
492 by the event; the pope's must be, without trial, examination, or further approbation than his own bare assertion.

CHAP. XIX.

That the Church Representative amongst the Jews was, for the most Part, the most corrupt Judge of Matters belonging to God; and the Reasons why it was so.

1. BUT was the neglect of Moses' law, or this people's inward corruption, abounding for want of restraint by it, the sole cause of their dulness in perceiving, or of their error in perverting the things of God's Spirit? This overflow of wickedness served as a tide to carry them; but the continual blasts of such vain doctrine, *Templum Domini, Templum Domini*, "The church, The church," was like a boisterous wind to drive them headlong into those sands, wherein they always made shipwreck of faith and conscience. The true prophets never had greater opposites than the priests, and such as the papists would have to be the only pillars, yea the only material parts of the church representative. Notwithstanding, whom the Fathers had traduced for impostors or sectaries, and oftentimes murdered as blasphemers of the Deity, or turbulent members of the state, the children revered as men of God and messengers of peace unto the church and commonweal. What was the reason of this diversity in their judgment? or doth it argue more steadfast belief in posterity? No, but more experience of the events foretold oftentimes, not fulfilled until the priests and other opposites, either coevals or ancients to the prophets, were

Posterity's good affection to the prophets their fathers had killed, oftentimes an argument rather of hypocrisy than sincerity.

covered with confusion. The children's motives to believe particulars oppugned by their parents were greater, and the impediments to withdraw their assent from them less. That the children should thus brook what their fathers most disliked in the prophets, is no more than we may observe in other writers. Few much revered in any faculty by posterity, but had eager detractors in their flourishing days, vicinity always breeding envy. And even of such as did not emulate them from their skill, nor would have been moved with envy at their fame or glory, they were not esteemed as they deserved, being defrauded of due praise by such of the same profession as better pleased the predominant humour, always next in election to the lavish magnificats of present times; but usually rejected by posterity when that particular humour (evermore shorter lived than the humourous) began to change. Thus in every faculty have those authors which most applied themselves to solidity of truth (neglecting newfangle tricks or flashes of extemporary wit) endured in greatest request and best credit throughout all ages: as meats strongest and most nourishing, not most delicate, are fittest for continual diet. What the Latin poet said of his poems, every prophet might have more truly applied unto his writings^y:

*Mox, tibi si quis adhuc pretendat nubila, livor
Occidet, et meriti post me referentur honores.*

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Though clouds of envy now may seem
Thy splendent rays to choke,
These with my ashes shall dissolve,
And vanish as their smoke.
What whilst I breathe sharp censure's blast,
When my leaf falls, shall spring,
Thy fame must flourish, as I fade,
Grave honour forth shall bring.

^y Statius in fine 12. Thebaid.

It was a method most compendious for attaining such eternity of fame, as the continual succession of mortality can afford us, which is given by another poet^z, but in prose; *Dum vivas virtutem colas, invenies famam in sepulchro*; “He that hunts after virtue in his whole course of life, shall be sure to meet with fame after death;” but hardly sooner: least of all, could these prophets be much honoured in their own country, whilst men of their own profession, carnally minded, possessed the chief seats of dignity, sometimes the best stay and pillars of faith in God’s church, most capable of that infallibility, which their proud successors did more boast of. Yet were even these seducers always willing to celebrate the memory of ancient prophets, because the authority given to their sayings, or reverence shewed unto their memory by the present people, over whom they ruled, did no way prejudice their own dignity or estimation, which rather increased by thus consorting with the multitude in their laudatoes of holy men deceased. Thus, from one and the same inordinate desire of honour and praise from men, did contrary effects usually spring in these masters of Israel. The dead they revered, because they saw that acceptable unto most, and likely to make way for their own praise amongst the people: but fear lest the living prophets should be their corrivals in suits of glory, (whereunto their souls were wholly espoused,) did still exasperate and whet the malice of impatient minds, conscious of their own infirmities against their doctrine, which could not be embraced, but their estimation must be impaired, their affections crossed, and their politic projects dashed. The higher in dignity the priest and rulers were, the more it vexed them, such poor men, as the true prophets for

Why the priests or spiritual rulers hated the living prophets whilst they loved the memory of the deceased.

^z Petrarch.

the most part were, should take upon them to direct the people. Their objections against those men of God, their scurrilous taunts and bitter scoffs, their odious imputations forged to make way for bloody persecutions, are most lively represented by the like practices of the Romish clergy ; continued almost as many years against the Albigeans, Hussites, and generally against all whom they suspect to have any familiarity with the Spirit, (whose testimony against them is as authentic as evident,) only overborne through God's permission in the world's sight, by prejudice of privateness. Thus, when poor Micaiah would not say as the king would have him, the politic state prophet Zidkiah, son of Chenaanah, gave him a blow on the cheek, to beat an answer out to this demand ; *When went the Spirit of the Lord from me to thee?* As many a proud 494 prelate would in like case reply upon his poor brother that should cross his opinion, specially in a matter belonging, though but afar off, unto the state ; Sirrah, I am your better, know your place, before whom and in what matter you speak. Nor did Zidkiah only, but four hundred more, (no otherwise discernible for false prophets than by such trial as we contend for,) as if they would have bound the Almighty to have followed most voices in bestowing victory, persuade the king to go up against Ramoth Gilead. But my former assertion is fully ratified by Micaiah's reply to the other's demand ; *When went the &c. Thou shalt see* (saith he^a) *in that day, when thou shalt go from chamber to chamber to hide thee.* No question but such as were neuters before, after they see his prophecy fulfilled in Ahab's overthrow, did take Micaiah for a prophet, as true as Zidkiah was false.

3. In like manner when Jeremy, a poor prophet and priest of Anathoth, had come unto Jerusalem among

^a Jer. ix. 15. 1 Kings xxii.

the prelates, and prophesied the truth, (but truth offensive to the state,) that all the evils which God had pronounced should be brought upon that city and her towns^b; Pashur, the son of Immer the priest, which was appointed governor in the house of the Lord, entreats him worse than Zidkiah had done Micaiah. He could have flouted him with as good applause of his complices, as the inquisitors can a protestant now; You that can read state fortunes afar off, can you tell where you shall lodge yourself this next night? if you cannot, take him for a better prophet that can. And by Pashur's prophecy he was to take up his lodging, in his way home, *in the stocks, that were in the high gate of Benjamin, near unto the house of the Lord*, whose desolation he had threatened. The like entertainment he found again at the whole multitude's hands, but by the priests' and prophets' instigation; *Now when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak unto all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, and said, Thou shalt die the death. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant^c?* As if the church of God could possibly err, or the gates of hell prevail against the splendour of it, would the Romish clergy add, should the Lord send a prophet with such tidings unto Rome? And did they not learn this interpretation of Christ's promise unto his church, from the hypocritical Jews their predecessors, which made the like comment in Jeremiah's time upon God's words as pregnant for the high priest's succession as St. Peter's; *Come, and let us imagine some device against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from*

^b Jer. xx. 1.

^c Jer. xxvi. 8, 9.

the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words^d? Away with the heretic! The manifestation of like affection in the prelates towards God's prophets, did embolden Shemaiah the Nehelemite, to write from Babylon unto Zephaniah the high priest and his associates to this effect: *The Lord hath made thee priest for Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man that raveth, and maketh himself a prophet, to put him in prison, and in the stocks. Now therefore why hast not thou reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which prophesied unto you?—This captivity is long: build houses to dwell*^e₄₉₅ *in; and plant gardens, and eat the fruits of them*^e.

4. But when Pashur found the omen of that name which Jeremiah gave him^f, when he and his mates proved indeed Magor-Missabid, a terror to themselves and all about them, when they saw with their eyes all the miseries there expressed, then was Jeremiah held for a true prophet, especially by such as outlived the captivity, to see the truth of his prophecy for their good as exactly fulfilled as this had been for their harm, whilst according to his prediction^g Shemaiah and his seed were rooted out from amongst God's people happily replanted in their native soil. For, from the reasons set down before, posterity did always better judge of prophecies than the age wherein their authors lived, at the least, the younger and meaner sort of that age, which outlived the event, usually better digested their doctrine than the ancient, or men of dignity, that envied them credit amongst the people; yet were not such as less maligned them greater believers universally, (as was said before,) but only of

^d Jer. xviii. 18. ^e Jer. xxix. 26. ^f Jer. xx. 3, 4. ^g Jer. lix. 31, 32.

some few particulars. For if a new prophet should have risen amongst them, he was almost as evil entreated by the present clergy, or others whose humours he contradicted. This is evident by the Scribes and Pharisees, and the chief rulers of the Jewish church, in our Saviour's time; *They builded the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous, and said,* (as they verily thought,) *If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets^h.* Yet made they the people of their own time so mad, as to be partakers with them in the blood of that great prophet, their long desired Messiah, the only Saviour of the world. Throughout the whole story almost of the Old Testament the truth proposed may appear, that the visible church (if it be taken in such a sense as the Romanists take it) was the most corrupt judge either of the truth or true meaning of God's word; that the people, seduced by their goodly shows and glorious titles of Moses' successors, were still brought into the combination of blood, until they brought upon themselves, their posterity, and the holy city, *all the righteous blood that was shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous until the blood of their Messiahⁱ.*

What means the people had to discern true prophets from false.

5. But though their cruelty and hypocrisy be so notoriously known, as it even seems to point out the like in the modern Romanist; yet some honestly minded will perhaps demand, how the people of those ages wherein the prophets lived could possibly know the truth of their prophecies, seeing for the most part they saw a major part of men in ecclesiastic authority bent against them. This haply may tempt unsettled minds to think the Lord had determined his prophets should

^h Matt. xxiii. 29, 30.

ⁱ Matt. xxiii. 35.

have Cassandra's fates, never to be believed till remedy were past. The people's mistaking of their predictions was in a sort fatal, yet not necessary, but upon supposition of former neglect. God sent them prophets for their good, but their wickedness turned his blessing into cursings, their hypocrisy and folly made them so blind, that they could not discern the signs of the times, until woful experience (the fool's only school-master) began to teach them, when their time for lore was ended. *A prudent man* (saith the Wise Man) *seeth the plague, and hideth himself: but the foolish go on still, and are punished*^k. But wherein doth that 496
prudence consist, which might have prevented this plague? Surely in reading God's law, and continual meditation thereon; for this gives wisdom to the simple. Men in this case should have asked *counsel of their own heart: for there is no man more faithful unto thee than it. For a man's mind is sometimes more accustomed to shew more than seven watchmen, that sit above in an high tower. And above all this, pray to the Most High, that he will direct thy way in truth*^l. Had they thus done without partiality to their corrupt affections, or without all respect of persons, (in which Christian faith cannot be had,) Moses' law had been a lantern unto their feet for the discerning of true prophets, and those discerned had been a light unto latter ages for discerning the true Messias.

6. The evidence of this truth, not without cause so often inculcated, will better appear, if we consider how most prophetical predictions of particular alterations were but determinations of Mosaical generalities, out of which they grow as branches out of the stock. As for example, the Lord told Moses before his death, and he gave it to Israel for a song to be copied out by all,

^k Prov. xxii. 3.^l Ecclus. xxxvii. 13—15.

That when they went a whoring after the gods of a strange land, forsaking him, he would forsake them, and hide his face from them^m. After Jehoiada's death, Zechariah his son seeing the princes of Judah leaving the house of the Lord to serve groves and idols, albeit he were moved, as the text saith, by the Spirit of God, yet only applies Moses' general prediction to the present times, *Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandment of the Lord? surely ye shall not prosper: because ye have forsaken the Lord, he also will forsake you*ⁿ. St. Paul himself useth his own advice, not the Lord's authority, in such points as were not evidently contained in Moses' law: *Unto the married command not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband*^o: for so Moses had expressly commanded. *But to the remnant I speak, not the Lord, If any brother have a wife that believeth not, if she be content to dwell with him, let him not forsake her.* And again; *Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give mine advice, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.* This was his judgment, and, as he thought, warranted by the Spirit of God; yet he prescribes it not as a general rule of faith to all, but rather leaves every man to be ruled by his conscience, and the analogy of Moses' law^p. So likewise, though God use an extraordinary revelation to instruct St. Peter in the free use of meats forbidden by Moses, yet he persuades him in it by manifesting the true meaning of another clause of the same law; for what he uttered upon this instruction, and the experiment answerable thereto, was but a further specification of what Moses had said, *I perceive of a truth*

^m Deut. xxxi. 16.

ⁿ 2 Chron. xxiv. 20.

^o 1 Cor. vii. 10.

^p See book 1. cap. 31. sect. 1. and book 2. cap. 7. sect. 9.

(saith St. Peter, Acts x. 34.) *that God is no acceptor of persons.* Moses had said, Deut. x. 17, *The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, mighty and terrible, which accepteth no persons, nor taketh reward: who doth right unto the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger^q, giving him food and raiment.*

7. These passages sufficiently inform us, that the 497 extraordinary spirit wherewith the apostles themselves were above the measure of God's former messengers inspired oftentimes, only made the stems, whether of the tree of life or of knowledge, planted by Moses, to blow and flourish in them by little and little, after the manner of natural growth; it did not always bring forth new ones in an instant, as the earth did at the first creation. Much more usually did prophecies during the standing of the first temple spring out of Mosaical predictions. If we compare his writings with latter prophecies, not long before the Babylonish captivity, though he had departed this life before their fathers entered into the land of promise, yet he speaks unto this last generation as an intelligencer from a far country, that great preparation was made against them, but who should be the executioners or managers of mischief intended, he leaves that to such prophets as the Lord should raise them up for the present. Jeremy and Ezekiel, upon his admonition, following his direction, are sent by God, as it were, to scour the coast, to descry when the navy comes, for what coast

^q It was a peculiar operation of God's Spirit (the principal end of this revelation) to instruct St. Peter that God's graces were to be communicated henceforth to the Gentiles. And this was but a branch of that precept of

loving strangers, so often ingeminated by their lawgiver. Had the Jews sincerely practised this duty towards aliens, the communications of God's graces unto the Gentiles could not have seemed so strange unto them.

it is bound, and how near at hand. Here had the people faithfully examined their hearts by Moses' law, whether not guilty of such sins as deserved the plagues threatened by him, they had quickly assented unto Moses' writings and the prophets' words. For as consciousness of their sins in general might cause them fear some plague or other, indefinitely threatened by their lawgiver, whose writings they best believed; so might the diligent observation of their particular transgressions, and their progress in them, have taught them to presage the determinate manner of their plagues and punishments foretold by the present prophet. For God, in his usual course of justice, so suits his punishments to the most accustomed habits or predominant sins, as unto men religiously observant of times and seasons the growth and process of the one will give a certain crisis of the other. Besides, every age hath peculiar signs subordinate to the general predictions of good or evil foretold by God's messengers, whereby the faithful learn to know the day of their visitation, and as Solomon saith, *to hide themselves* (in latibulo Altissimi) *from the plague*; if not by their hearty repentance, godly prayers, and religious endeavours, to prevent it. And because we in this age are not so well acquainted with the particular signs of former times wherein true prophets lived, it is hard for any living now, though easy to all the faithful then, to give any certain or particular rule how the truth of their prophecies might have been at least probably known, before the event did finally and absolutely approve them. Would to God we could discern the signs of times present; and the Lord of his infinite mercy give us grace to know the day of our visitation! But of this argument elsewhere by God's assistance. It shall suffice in the next place to shew that our Sa-

viour's doctrine was by the same means to be discerned.

CHAP. XX.

498

That the Sovereignty given by Jesuits to the Pope is greater than our Saviour's was.

1. IT is a rule in divinity, "Whatsoever can rightly be conceived as an absolute perfection hath real existence in the Almighty." From this notion of the Deity, swimming in the brains of such as in heart and deed make the pope their lord and god, do the parties thus affected usually take whatsoever power might possibly be delegated by God to any, as actually granted unto his holiness. And thus I imagine some Jesuit or other, when he shall bethink himself, will except against our disputes in this present case: Deny you cannot that God can, and what if he should expressly grant such authority as the pope now challengeth, would your arguments conclude him to be Antichrist, or the doctrine we teach to be blasphemous? On the contrary, seeing our Saviour Christ did never either practise or challenge, seeing neither Moses nor the prophets did ever so much as once intimate such absolute power should be acknowledged in that great prophet of whom they wrote; we suppose the imagination of the like, in whomsoever, cannot be without real blasphemy. Yet suppose Christ's infallibility and the pope's were (in respect of the church militant) the same, the pope's authority would be greater; or were their authority but equal, his privileges with God would be much more magnificent than Christ's. That which most condemned the Jews of infidelity in not acknowledging Christ as sent with power full and absolute from God his Father, were his mighty signs and wonders, his admirable skill in God's word already established; but chiefly his sacred life and conversa-

Though the pope's infallibility be made by Jesuits but equal to Christ's, yet is his sovereignty much greater in respect of Christian people.

tion, as it were exhibiting unto the world a visible pattern or conspicuous model of that incomprehensible goodness which is infallible. Now if we compare Christ his powerfulness in words and works with the pope's imperfections in both, or his Divine virtues with the other's monstrous vices; to equalize their infallibilities were to imagine God to be like man, and Christ (at the best) but as his faithful servant; the pope his minion, his darling, or son of his age. For such is our partiality to our own flesh, that oftentimes (though the Wise Man advise to the contrary) a lewd and naughty son (in that he is a son) hath greater grace and privileges than the most faithful servant in the father's house. So would the Jesuits make God dote upon the pope, whose authority (be his life never so ungracious) if they should deny to be less than Christ's in respect of us, their practices enjoined *ex cathedra* would confute them. For much sooner shall any Christian, though otherwise of life unspotted, be cut off from the congregation of the faithful, for denying the pope's authority or distrusting his decrees, than the Jews that saw Christ's miracle, for contradicting him in the days of his flesh, or oppugning his apostles after his glorification. Nor boots it ought to say, They make the pope's authority less than Christ's, in respect they derive it from his; rather, because they evidently make it greater than Christ's was, it cannot be truly thence derived: or if it could, this only proves it to be less than the other whilst only compared with it, not whilst we consider both in respect of us: for Christ's authority as the Son of man, in respect of us, is equal to his Father's, whence it is derived; *for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son*^r.

^r John v. 22.

2. But wherein do they make the pope's authority greater than Christ's? First, in not exempting it from trial by Christ's and his apostles' doctrine, neither of which were to be admitted without all examination of their truth; for as you heard before, God's word was first uttered in their audience, established by evident signs and wonders in their sight and presence, of whom belief and obedience unto particulars was exacted. And it is a rule most evident and unquestionable, that God's word once confirmed, and sealed by experience, was the only rule whereby all other spirits and doctrines were to be examined; that not prophetical visions were to be admitted into the canon of faith, but upon their apparent consonancy with the word already written. The first prophets were to be tried by Moses, the latter by Moses and their predecessors; Christ's and his apostles, by Moses and all the prophets, *for unto him did all the prophets give testimony*^s. The manifest experiments of his life and doctrine, so fully consonant to their predictions, did much confirm even his disciples' belief unto the former canon, of whose truth they never conceived positive doubt.

3. Again, there had been no prophet, no signs, no wonders for a long time in Judah before our Saviour's birth; yet he never made that use either of his miracles, or more than prophetical spirit, which the papists make of their imaginary public spirit; he never used this or like argument to make the people rely upon him. How know ye the scriptures are God's word? How know ye that God spake with Moses in the wilderness, or with your fathers in mount Sinai? Moses, your fathers, and the prophets are dead, and their writings cannot speak. Your present teachers, the Scribes and Pharisees, do no wonders. Must you not

^s Acts x. 43. Vide Acts iii. 18. 21. 24.

then believe him whom daily you may behold doing such mighty works as Moses is said to have done; that Moses, as your fathers have told you, was sent from God; that God's word is contained in his writings: otherwise you cannot infallibly believe that there was such a man indeed as you conceive he was, much less that he wrote you this law, least of all can you certainly know the true meaning of what he wrote. He that is the only sure foundation of faith knew that faith grounded upon such doubts was but built upon the sand, unable to abide the blasts of ordinary temptations; that thus to erect their hopes was but to prepare a rise to a grievous downfall, the ready way to atheism, presumption, or despair. For this cause he doth not so much as once question how they knew the scriptures to be God's word; but supposing them known and fully acknowledged for such, he exhorts his hearers to search them, seeking to prepare their hearts by signs and wonders to embrace his admirable expositions of them. And because the corruption of particular moral doctrines, brought into the church by human tradition, would not suffer the generality of Moses and the Prophets already believed to fructify in 500 his hearers' hearts, and branch out uniformly into lively working faith, he laboured most to weed out pharisaism from among the heavenly seed; as every one may see that compares his sermon upon the mount with the Pharisees' glosses upon Moses. If the particular or principal parts of the law and prophets had been as purely taught or as clearly discerned, as the general and common principles; his doctrine, that came *not to destroy, but to fulfil* the law in words and works, had shined as brightly in his hearers' hearts at the first proposal, as the sun did to their eyes at the first rising. For all the moral duties required by them were but as

dispersed rays or scattered beams of that Divine light and glory, which was incorporate in him as splendour in the body of the sun. Nor was there any possibility the Jews' belief in him should prosper, unless it grew out of their general assent unto Moses' doctrine, thus pruned and purged at the very root: *Had ye believed Moses, (saith our Saviour,) ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words*^t? For which cause they were in conscience bound to examine his doctrine by Moses and the Prophets; otherwise they might have believed the saving truth but falsely, and upon deceitful grounds. The stronger or more absolute credence they had given unto his words or works without such examination, the more they had ensnared their souls, and set their consciences upon the rack, by admitting a possibility of contradiction betwixt two doctrines both firmly believed, without any evidence of their consonancy, or both conspiring to the same end. The speedier and higher this edification in Christ had been, the sooner it might have ruined that foundation which God by Moses and the prophets had reared in Israel, unless this new work had been orderly squared, well proportioned, closely laid, and strongly cemented unto the former. In secular schools he is held an unwise answerer that will admit Socratical interrogations; for albeit there appear no difficulty in any one proposed apart, yet in the process a respondent may be easily brought to grant conclusions from which he knows not what consequences may be drawn, because their consonancy with the problem, whose defence he undertakes, is not so evident nor immediate as upon a sudden may be fully examined. And not examining the consonancy of every other proposi-

To believe Christ without examination of his doctrine by Moses, had been neither to believe Christ nor Moses.

^t John v. 45.

tion with the principles of that faculty whereto the problem belongs, the best answerer living may be made either grant what he should not, or deny what should be granted. Now Christ's doctrine was to Mosaical and prophetical, as the conclusion to the premises, or as the corollary of greatest use unto the speculative theorem. Suppose then a Jew well skilled in Moses and the Prophets, should instantly upon the first hearing of our Saviour's sermons, or sight of his miracles, have admitted him for such an infallible teacher, upon terms as absolute and irrevocable as the Jesuit would have the pope acknowledged by all Christians, a good disputant might easily have staggered him by these or like Socratical demands: Do you steadfastly believe Moses' writings for God's word? God forbid I should doubt of this. Do ye believe this new doctrine confirmed by miracles as firmly? What if I do? Do you know as certainly whether both agree, as well as one part of Moses' writings with another? What if I do not? Until you be fully resolved in this, your belief
501 in both cannot be sound: for in case they should disagree, the one must needs be false; and if choice were given you, whether in sooth would you disclaim? Here a wise man, that (as the wise king speaks) had eyes in his head, and would not be led by a blind faith, would have paused a while, and thought with himself, This is a point that should be looked to; for if these new doctrines should prove incompatible, as for any just examination hitherto made they may, I cannot see whether deserves more credence; whiles I consider Moses' writings, and call to mind those mighty wonders our fathers told us, with like continual experiments of their Divine truth, nothing can seem more certain than they: again, whiles I behold these new miracles, methinks his authority that works them

should be as great as Moses' was; yet if they should happen to disagree, the one must be better believed than the other, or else (for aught I see) there can be no certainty of either; for if this man's possibly may be, why might not Moses' doctrine likewise be false? or if our fathers were deceived by his signs and wonders, why may not we be so served by this man's miracles? But if upon just trial they shall be found fully to agree in every point, (as I trust they do,) then doubtless both are from God, and I shall steadfastly believe this new doctrine to be Divine, if such as Moses had foretold; and withal, more evidently acknowledge than before I could, that Moses spake by the Spirit of the all-seeing, ever-living God, if this Jesus of Nazareth be in all points like to him, and so qualified as he foretold the great Prophet should be. But in the interim, till the trial be made, it is best to lay sure hold on Moses and the Prophets. For *prior tempore, potior jure*; their writings doubtless were from God, because hitherto they could not be destroyed: time and they shall try whether Jesus and his doctrine be so or no; whether he be that great Prophet that should come, or we are yet to look for some other.

4. Thus when John Baptist sent his disciples to our Saviour with this very question, *Art thou he that should come, or shall we look for another?* the answer he returned again (whether for confirmation of John's own faith, or, as the most interpreters think, of his disciples') was this, and no more; *Go and shew John what things ye have seen and heard, that the blind see, the halt go, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, and the gospel is preached to the poor, and blessed is he that shall not be offended in me*^u. These or other of their fellow-disciples had informed

Prophetical
testimonies
did more
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mised
Messias
than any
miracles.

^u Matt. xi. 3, &c. and Luke vii. 18, 19, 22.

their master John before of Christ's healing the centurion's servant by his word or command, though absent; of his raising the widow's son from death to life; of the rumours spread abroad of him throughout all Judæa and the regions round about: and upon this report, as St. Luke tells us, did John make the former solemn demand. But some will yet demand, how could he or his disciples be confirmed by the answer given them, wherein is little more than formerly both had heard? for the raising up of the widow's son, which especially occasioned their coming, was the greatest of all in this catalogue, and yet as great as this some of the ancient prophets had done; how could it then prove him to be the Messiah? Had he told them as much in plain terms they might have believed him, because this great work did witness him to be a prophet, and therefore one that could not lie; but by this answer, how could they gather more than the people upon the astonishment of that accident had said^x? for *when the dead man sat up, and spake, fear, saith the Evangelist, came on them all: and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is raised up among us, and God hath visited his people*, Luke vii. 16.

- 502 5. Yet this objection, at least the solution, confirms the truth of my former assertion, that by his miracles alone considered, they were not bound absolutely to believe he was the Messiah, but by comparing them with other circumstances, or presupposed truths, especially the scripture's received and approved prophecies of the Messiah: though no one for the greatness of power manifested in it could of itself, yet the frequency of them at that time, and the condition of the parties on whom they were wrought, might absolutely confirm John and his disciples; because such they were in these

^x See a treatise called Christ's Answer to John's Disciples.

and every respect, as the evangelical prophet had foretold Messiah should work : for this reason our Saviour delivers his answer in the prophet's own words^y, as elsewhere he himself did read them, then best interpreted by *the signs of the time*, that John might see by the event he was the man of whom Isaiah speaks^z, *He whom the Lord had appointed to preach the gospel to the poor, whom he had sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty such as were bruised, and that he should preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* The multitude of blind men restored to sight in their presence, was a good preparative to dissolve that suffusion which had blinded their hearts ; the releasing of so many from the possession of unclean spirits, was an ocular demonstration he was the man appointed to preach deliverance to the captives ; plagues and sicknesses then cured by him in great abundance, were sure pledges to the observant that he was the great Physician of body and soul so often spoken of by Isaiah. Besides, John's moving this doubt at that very instant wherein such variety of miracles (of all, or most of which, his disciples one or other were eyewitnesses) did concur, all, so well suited to the several predictions of Isaiah^a ; and these,

^y Though in that sixty-first of Esay no express mention be made of restoring blind men to sight, yet the Septuagint (as elsewhere) truly express the meaning of the Hebrew phrase there used. For in the Hebrew dialect, as some judicious Hebricians observe, the deaf or blind are called *vincti* or *ligati*.

^z Luke iv. 18, 19. *At that time* (when John's disciples came

unto him) *he cured many of their sicknesses and plagues, and of evil spirits ; and unto many blind men he gave sight. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Go your ways, and shew John what things ye have seen and heard ; that the blind see, the halt go, &c.* Luke vii. 21, 22.

^a Isaiah lxi. 1—3, and xxxv. 5. and liii. 4.

as John^b could instruct them, all unquestionably meant of the Messias, was an infallible argument of God's unspeakable providence in thus disposing times and seasons for their fuller resolution. The like disposition of the Divine providence might the ingrateful Nazarites have observed. First, that when he stood up to read in the synagogue, they should deliver the book of the evangelical prophet before any other^c; afterwards, that he should at the first opening light upon that very place wherein his late miracles, yet rife in all men's mouths, (as appeareth by St. Mark^d,) were foretold: especially, if they had diligently marked the meanness of their own estate, the manner of his coming thither, moved (as the evangelist saith^e) *by the spirit*, which, as the prophet had foretold^f, was to be upon him, and did manifest itself at that time by his strange escaping his turbulent countrymen's desperate attempts against him. This melodious harmony betwixt his works and God's word already established, and this sweet disposition of the Divine providence, in causing the one sound in men's ears whilst the other were in their eyes, were in his heavenly wisdom the best means to establish true and lively faith: he never exacted blind obedience, which who so suffers to be imposed upon him by others, or seeks to enforce upon himself, strives to put out that light of nature or inferior grace, whereby he should view and mark the ways of God, always confirming his truth already revealed by experiments and *signs of the time* proportioned to them.

^b For John himself, in the words immediately precedent, had been taught by God himself to discern Christ for the true Messias. Compare John i. 33. with Esay lxi. 1. and xlii. 1.

and xi. 2.

^c Luke iv. 16, 17, &c.

^d Mark vi. 2. and Luke iv. 23.

^e Luke iv. 14.

^f Esay lxi. i. Luke iv. 29, 30.

6. From these instances, to omit others, the reader ⁵⁰³ may resolve himself in what sense Christ's works are said to bear witness of his divinity, or condemn the Jews of infidelity. Both which they manifestly did, yet not in themselves, not as severally considered or sequestered from all signs of times and seasons; but as they involved such concurrence of God's providence, or presupposed such prophetical predictions, as have been intimated. Every miracle was apt of itself to breed admiration, and beget some degree of faith, as more than probably arguing the assistance of a power truly divine. But seeing Moses had forewarned God would suffer seducers to work wonders for the trial of his people's faith, who, besides him that gave them this liberty, could set them bounds beyond which they should not pass? who could precisely define the compass of that circle, within which only Satan could exercise the power he had by that permission? Be it granted (which is all men otherwise minded concerning this point demand) that Beelzebub himself with the help of all his subjects can effect nothing exceeding the natural passive capacity of things created; he must be as well seen in the secrets of nature as these subtile spirits are, that can precisely define in all particulars what may be done by force of nature, what not. Hardly can we (without some admonitions to observe their carriage) discern the sleight of ordinary jugglers: much more easily might the prince of darkness so blind our natural understanding, as to make us believe (were the light of God's word taken away) that were effected by his power which had been wrought by the finger of God, that secret conveyance of materials elsewhere preexistent, into our presence, was a new creation of them.

*In what
sense
Christ's
works are
said to bear
witness of
him.*

7. For mine own part, (until I be by some others

better instructed,) I rest persuaded our Saviour taught the same doctrine I now deliver : thus much at least— Such signs and wonders might be wrought by seducers, that such as would gaze on them, and trust their own skill in discerning their tricks, should hardly escape their snares: *If any man say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe it not: for false Christs shall arise, and false prophets, and shall shew signs and wonders, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect*^g. And possible it was to have deceived even these, if it had been possible for these not to have tried their wonders by the written word. Wherefore necessary it was, that which immediately follows should be written for our instruction: *But take you heed*, (this he spake to his elect apostles,) *behold, I have told you all things before*. Much easier it was for such seducers to counterfeit his greatest wonders with deceitful sleights, undiscoverable for the present, than in these plain distinct predictions of matters so far above the pitch of ordinary observation, so to imitate him as time should not detect their impostures, nor experience convince them of open folly, or their soothsaying of grossest falsehood. And consequently, this very oracle, compared with the event, was of more force to establish true faith than any one miracle he ever wrought, considered alone. Yea, this foolish expectation the Jews had their Messiah should work mighty, but pompous and vainglorious wonders, did make them (not pre-fashioned in mind to those descriptions the prophets had made of his first coming in humility) undervalue both his true miracles and heavenly doctrine. Even such as
504 are said to have believed in him for the works they had seen him do, seemed doubtful whether to acknowledge him for some great prophet, or for their long

^g Mark xiii. 21, 22.

looked for Messias: *Many of the people* (saith St. John) *believed in him, and said, When the Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than this man hath done*^h?

And as the same evangelist elsewhere tells us, such as had tasted of his miraculous goodness, and in huge troops followed him for their daily food, that had nowhere to lay his head by night, *desire a further sign, that they might see and believe the Father had sent him*ⁱ.

His late satisfying five thousand hungry souls with five loaves, they deemed much less than Moses sustaining six hundred thousand so long with manna, a meat immediately sent from heaven, not made by multiplication of such bread as they might have bought of ordinary bakers. Nor doth our Saviour seek to win

Expectation of pompous and vainglorious miracles, the original of Jewish infidelity.

them by outvying Moses in multitude or magnificence of his miracles, but by alluring them to taste and prove his heavenly doctrine. For the experiments that give us the seal and assurance of lively faith must of necessity be within us, even in our hearts and in our souls; and these are they.

Had this people without miracles been *dicto audiens*, as they were enjoined by Moses, in that they took him for a prophet, they might in short time have known what Peter confessed, “*Verba vitæ æternæ habes,*” *Thou hast the words of eternal life*^k, whose sweetness once inwardly tasted, was much more than all the miracles that could be wrought

No man is ever truly converted without an internal miracle, wrought in his own soul; unto this end only outward miracles serve.

without his hearers or upon them. But of such works these proud Jews never dreamed, as not knowing the scriptures, nor the virtue of their Messias, who, as the prophets had foretold, *was to preach the gospel unto the poor, to comfort such as mourned in Sion*, to whom no miracles could be more welcome than such as he did; for what could be more acceptable to the blind, than restitution of sight? to the lame, than right use of

^h John vii. 31.

ⁱ John vi. 30.

^k John vi. 68.

his limbs? what more grateful message could be uttered to the deaf than *Ephata*, to have his ears opened? what to the dumb, than untying of the tongue? what to the possessed, than to be freed from the tyranny of Satan or his ministers. Finally, as the evangelist notes, *He did all things well*¹, and unto the best contentment possible of every afflicted soul, far above the exigence or significations of their peculiar necessities, but further beyond their expectation. In every work he shewed his willingness; in all, his power to ease and refresh all that were weary and heavy laden: but unto such as thought themselves so whole and sound, as no way to need his physic, rather desirous to feed their curious fancies with superfluous or unnecessary wonders, he was not willing to give satisfaction by turning God's graces into wantonness, or vain ostentation of his power or skill. Another especial occasion of this people's stumbling at this stone elect and precious, was their not considering that many of Moses' greatest wonders were types, partly of those glorious miracles which Messiah was to work secretly by his Spirit, manifested only to the hearts and consciences in whom they were wrought; partly of that his glory and power, which was outwardly revealed to his disciples, and might so have been to more, had they not stumbled (as the proverb is) in the very entry, and so departed from him in despair, bred from a foolish prejudice, that no great good could be expected from a Nazarite, of parentage, birth, and education so mean.

¹ Mark vii. 37.

CHAP. XXI.

505

Confirming the Truth delivered in the former Chapter from the very Law given by Moses for discerning the great Prophet; further exemplifying the Use and Force of Miracles for begetting Faith: the Manner of trying Prophecies: of the Similitude betwixt Christ and Moses.

1. As well for further discovery of Romish blasphemy, as ratification of our former assertion, let us view with diligence that place of Moses wherein such strict obedience and attention to the Messias' doctrine is enjoined, as nowhere else; such as no other may exact, without incurring the curse there threatened to the disobedient: *The Lord thy God will raise thee up a Prophet like unto me from among you, even of thy brethren; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, when thou saidst, Let me hear the voice of my Lord God no more, nor see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*ⁿ.

This prophecy by joint consent of best interpreters, as well modern as ancient, pontificians as protestants, may be truly and literally applied to other prophets, whether of the Old or New Testament, according to that measure of the Spirit they had from him, of whose fulness all, as well such as in time went before as those that came after him, had received grace for grace. True it is, if we rightly value the strict

The law cited, literally meant both of Christ and the prophets.

ⁿ Deut. xviii. 15—19.

propriety of every word or clause in the whole context; what all historical circumstances put together import, or the full extent of St. Peter's paraphrase^o on the last sentence; it cannot be exactly fitted unto any but Christ, unto whom only the whole discourse is as fully commensurable, as a well made garment to the body that wears it: yet is this no impediment why the same rule, taken according to some literal circumstances, might not usually serve for certain discretion of true prophets from false, as we use to notify lesser but indefinite quantities of things by the known parts of some greater measure, commensurable, if we take the whole, to substances of a larger size.

How far,
and on
what terms,
Israel was
bound by
the former
law to hear
all God's
prophets.

2. Evident it is out of the literal meaning of this law acknowledged by all, that Israel was strictly bound to hearken unto such prophets as God at any time should raise them up, though with most attention and greatest reverence to hear the Prince of prophets. But the question is, upon what terms, or how far they were bound to hear all; absolutely, and at first proposal of their doctrines, without examination of them by the written law? So might he that could have set the best leg foremost, and stepped up soonest into Moses' chair, have kept the rest of his profession in awe by thundering out anathemas thence, as the pope doth from St. Peter's to all gainsayers, priest or people. By what rule then were true prophets to be distinguished from false? by miracles? These were means oftentimes effectual, but (as was intimated) more usual for enforcing men to an acknowledgment of the truth in general, than for trying particular controversies by amongst true professors; in respect of whom they were subordinate to that rule given by Moses in the words immediately following: *But the prophet that shall*

^o Acts iii. 23. See parag. 21.

presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that speaketh in the name of other gods, even the same prophet shall die. And if thou think in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not therefore be afraid of him^p.

3. Before this or any other part of the law was written, somewhat in proportion answerable to it did always necessarily concur with miracles for distinguishing true professors from seducers. When the controversy was betwixt Moses and Pharaoh's enchanters, the Lord confutes his adversaries by an ocular demonstration of his power, yet further ratified by their confession whose words were the best oracles which that people knew. These fair warnings concurring with the Egyptians' consciousness of their merciless practices against poor Israel, still thriving in despite of policy, could not but witness even to the most unnatural men amongst them, that the God of Jacob and his seed was a Father to the fatherless, a help to the helpless, a God of mercy, and a God of strength, willing and able to right such as suffered wrong, to succour all in distress, that with faith and patience commended their cause unto his patronage. The most devoutly superstitious or idolatrous might (at the least) more than probably have gathered, that the God of Moses was greater than any they or their cunning magicians worshipped. But it is a curiosity incident to superstitious hypocrites at their first entrance into God's school, scrupulously to demand full

Miracles in themselves no sure rule of trying prophets before the law was given.

^p Dent. xviii. 20—22.

satisfaction in all doubts or difficulties that can be suggested, and (as if they sought to obtain mercy by way of bargain, not by faith or favour) to have their assurance precisely drawn and fully sealed, before they surrender up the least part of their interest in any pleasure, commodity, or custom long enjoyed, though never so destitute of reason. As in this case, imagine some Romish schoolman or Jesuit had been in such favour in Pharaoh's court, as that crew is now in too many princes'; what other collections could we imagine he would have made, but these? "How do these wonders prove the God of Israel to be so great a God as Moses boasts of? He hath more skill, we see, in these particulars than the gods adored by us Egyptians; therefore in all? or more in these than the gods of any other nation? These were stranger works, indeed, than we expected such poor silly fellows could have wrought; but may not others by the same reason work more strange hereafter?" And to speak the truth, more that victory Moses had over the Egyptians could not prove unto the natural man, (so long as he considered the wonders only in themselves, without any concurrence of other circumstances or truth presupposed,) than that this God of Israel was greater than any other he yet knew of, not greater than any that might manifest himself hereafter. Notwithstanding, these
507 few documents or essays of his power, compared with the end and occasions for which they were exhibited, were so fully conformable to those natural notions even the heathen had of the Deity, that no man free from passion or prejudice of their mean estate, for whose good the cunningest were thus foiled at their own weapon, and the mightiest among the Egyptians plagued, but might have seen the finger of a good, a just, and merciful God in all their troubles, had he in sobriety

of spirit seriously consulted his own heart. And whoso sincerely had glorified his name, according to this measure of knowledge, or apprehension of his justice, to him no doubt more had been given daily of this bread of life.

4. The Jews, I am persuaded, could have given as many instances of devils cast out by Beelzebub the prince of devils^a, as might have defeated any induction gathered from the manifold practice of such works (considered alone) to prove the Divine Power's assistance. Most apparently, most malicious notwithstanding was their application of such instances to our Saviour, whose usual manner of dispossessing wicked spirits of those mansions wherein they had revelled most, did abundantly witness he wrought *by the finger of God*, who only was greater than *that strong man* whom he vanquished, bound, and spoiled of his goods, servants, and possessions. For though devils sometimes suffer themselves to be commanded by men, neither of greatest wisdom, best place, nor fashion; yet this they do (as any well instructed in God's law, or illuminated with the notions of good and evil, will easily discern) always with purpose to bring men unto a perpetual acknowledgment of some divine power in them, or to performance of some magical service unto them; no otherwise than cheating mates or cunning gamesters can be well content to suffer bunglers beat them the first or second set, in hope to entice them to hold play longer, or for greater wagers. On the contrary, the only fee our Saviour demanded for all his admirable cures in this kind was, the parties should give such glory unto God alone as that infernal crew most detested, but which the law of Moses, so highly esteemed by his calumniators, did purposely

The end and manner of our Saviour's casting out devils did sufficiently testify his Divine power, albeit others had cast out devils by the help of Beelzebub.

^a Matt. xii. 24.

require in defiance of Beelzebub and all the powers of darkness. The end of every particular dispossession was such, and the multitude of confessions, sincerely uttered by poor souls set free, so many, as his bitterest adversaries' own consciences could not but witness against themselves, that all the chief titles of Satan's wonted triumphs over God's people were utterly overthrown, that he could not urge them either unto such blasphemies against God, or outrages against themselves or their neighbours, as he most delighted in. Besides, few or no instances could (I think) be brought of devils cast out in any magician's name, in Christ's they were, and (as it seems) by such as had better acquaintance or more alliance with his accusers than with himself. Thus much our Saviour, in my conjecture, intimates in that speech, *By whom then do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges*^r. Which words I neither would refer to Christ's disciples, as some good interpreters do, nor (as others) unto such exorcists as those mentioned Acts xix. 15, which, attempting to throw out this strong man, were overthrown in their own play; but unto such as John complained of; *Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, which followed not us, and we forbade* 508 *him*^s. This man, though no disciple, was neither so ill disposed in himself, nor so maliciously affected to our Saviour, as these Jews were, as appears by our Saviour's answer unto John; *Forbid him not: for there is no man that can do a miracle in my name, that lightly speaks evil of me. For whosoever is not against us, is on our part*^t. In the same words he concludes his disputation against the Jews in the fore-cited place^u.

^r Matt. xii. 27.^s Mark ix. 38.^t Ver. 39.^u Matt. xii. 30.

5. Such as this man was, none of Christ's followers, but rather a friend (as seems) of his accusers, yet using Christ's not Beelzebub's name to cast out devils, were competent witnesses of his heavenly virtue and his adversaries' malicious partiality. Many other circumstances, well known then, not now, especially the long want of miracles more than prophecies, before his coming, did manifest their malice to be more impudent and shameless than we in such distance of time can discern. That finger of God (from such signs of the time as we in general may suppose) far more apparent in his victories over Satan himself, than in Moses over his scholars the enchanters, especially whiles compared with known prophecies of the Messiah, did point him out to be *the woman's seed*, ordained of old to bruise the serpent's head; to be *the Son of man*, appointed to erect the everlasting kingdom foretold by Daniel, unto whose and other prophecies he refers his enemies in that speech, *But if I by the Spirit* (or, as St. Luke reads^v, *by the finger*) *of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come unto you*^x. Yet were not all his miracles of this kind thus considered, so effectual to confirm the faithful, or so pregnant to condemn all unbelievers, as the former rule of Moses. For this cause, after the former dispute ended, he gave his adversaries such a sign, as if it did follow would infallibly prove him to be that great prophet Moses there speaks of, and consequently leave them liable to God's heavy judgment without excuse, for not hearkening unto him. Of which hereafter.

6. Here I may once for all conclude, that the power of doing miracles was as effectual to assure such as did them of salvation, as sight of them done was to establish spectators in saving faith. But the power of

^v Luke xi. 20.^x Matt. xii. 28.

casting devils out, or doing greatest miracles, was no infallible pledge of salvation to such as did them ; much less could the acknowledgment of this Divine power in them breed full assurance of true faith in others, but only serve as a means to cause them rely upon the Law and Prophets as their only rule, and to taste and prove the bread of life proffered to them by our Saviour, which alone could ascertain them their names were written in the book of life. But to proceed by the former rule.

Christ was to be acknowledged for the great Prophet by his supereminency in those gifts of the Spirit whereby former prophets had been approved.

7. If others by experiments answerable to it were known to be true prophets, Christ likewise by his known supereminency in that which approved them was to be acknowledged for the Prince of prophets. Now if we revise the history of the Old Testament, how few prophets shall we find endowed with the gift of miracles ; such as were, did exercise their power rather among idolaters than true professors. So when God's messengers were brought to as open competition with Baal's priests in the king of Israel's, as Moses had been with the enchanters in Pharaoh's court, Elias^y makes his calling as clear as the light by calling down fire from heaven, which Baal's priests attempting in most furious manner could not effect : but Elias professed thus much before, as Baal's priests no question had done ; so as the event answering to his prediction, not to the others', did by Moses' rule demonstrate him to be, them not to be, prophets of the living God. But when the like controversy was to be tried between Zedekiah and his four hundred complices, on the one part, and Micaiah^z on the other, before king Ahab, in whom Elias' late miracles and later threats had wrought such a distaste of Baal and such a liking of the truth in general, as he would not consult either

^y 1 Kings xviii.

^z 1 Kings xxii.

any professed servant of the one, or open oppugner of the other, for his future success ; Micaiah (as was observed before) appeals to this law of Moses as a most competent judge between such as jointly did embrace it ; *If thou return in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me^a* ; as if he had said, (what Moses there doth,) *he hath not put his word in my mouth*. And having brought his controversy to this trial, he desires the people to contestate the issue thus joined ; *And he said, Hearken, all ye people*. From this and many like cases, ruled by the former express and pregnant law of Moses, Jeremy pleads his warrant, being borne down by the contradictions of Hananiah, a professed prophet of the Lord as he was, but of greater favour in the court, because he prophesied peace unto the present state, and good success to the projects then on foot : *Even the prophet Jeremiah said, So be it : the Lord so do : the Lord confirm thy words which thou hast prophesied, to restore the vessels of the Lord's house, and all that is carried captive, from Babel into this place. But hear thou now this word that I will speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people ; The prophets that have been before me and before thee in times past prophesied against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of plague, and of pestilence. And the prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him^b*. Ezekiel likewise refers himself to the same trial amongst such as were professed hearers of the word in general, which they would not obey in particular : *And, lo, thou art unto them as a jesting song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can sing well : for they hear thy words, and do them*

^a 1 Kings xxii. 28.^b Jer. xxviii. 6—9.

not. And when this cometh to pass, (for lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them^c.

In what
case Moses'
rule for dis-
cerning
true pro-
phets did
hold infalli-
bly true.

8. From these debatements we may gather in what cases the former rule held for certain. First, negatively, it was universally true; for he that prophesied any thing which came not to pass, did sufficiently prove himself to be no true prophet, but a counterfeit. So did not every prediction of what afterwards came to pass necessarily argue it to have been from God. Yet as the force and virtue of many things, not such of themselves, became evident from vicinity or irritation of their contraries; so though God permitted some to foretell strange events for trial of his people's faith, yet this power he restrained when the controversy came to a formal trial: then he caused the true prophets' words to stand, whiles the predictions of the false, and the prince's blood which relied upon them, fell to the ground, like Dagon before the ark. So as the fulfilling of what the one, and frustrating of what the other had said, did sufficiently manifest the one had spoken of himself presumptuously; the other, 510 what the Lord had put into his mouth. Hence is the determination easy, what means this people had to discern amongst true prophets which was that great one in all things like to Moses. First, if events foretold did sufficiently testify of his Divine spirit; his own witness of himself would be authentic, because a true prophet could hardly lie, or make himself greater than he was. This is an argument which directly confutes such as acknowledge Christ to have been a prophet, sincere in doctrine and mighty in deeds, and yet deny him to be the prince of that profession, the great Mediator of the new covenant, both which he often

^c Ezek. xxxiii. 32, 33.

avouched. Besides, the quantity of that spirit, whose sincere quality manifested him to be a prophet, would notify his excessive greatness in that rank and order ; or, more directly to the question,

9. The great prophet there spoken of was to be known by his similitude with Moses, who was as the symbol or proportional mean between him and lesser prophets. Other, in these few gifts wherein they resembled their father, came far short of him ; Christ in all far exceeding him. Others were all of Jacob's line, raised up by God's appointment so to instruct their brethren in doubtful cases, as they should not need to consult sorcerers, or entertain familiarity with wicked spirits. Christ, (to omit the eminency of his prophetic function till hereafter,) besides this common fraternity with his people, was in more especial manner Abraham's seed, and in particular sort raised up by Jehovah his God, by intrinsic assumption into the unity of his person, not by external assistance or impulsion of his spirit. Raised likewise he was in a strict and proper sense *מקרב אחיהם*, from amid this people, being as it were extracted out of the pure virgin, as the first woman was out of the man, by Jehovah's own immediate hand ; from his cradle to his cross, most exactly answering to that delineation of the great Prophet and Mediator to be revealed, which was exhibited first in Moses, when he stood before the Lord in Horeb. His strange deliverance from Herodian butchery, whiles all the infant males besides did perish, was fully parallel to the other's exemption from Pharaoh's cruelty : like to Moses^e he was in the number of his disciples, in communication of his Spirit unto them, in admitting them to more special participation of his secrets, in the peculiar testifications of his familiarity with God, in his

Moses' description of the great prophet in strict propriety of the words used by him, peculiar unto Christ.

^d See Deut. xviii. 18.

^e Num. xi. 16. See St. Luke x. 1, &c.

fasting, in his transfiguration, in multitude of miracles. But these and the like I leave to the reader's observation^f.

The excellency of the great prophet in respect of Moses gathered from the difference betwixt Moses and the lesser prophets.

10. The peculiar and proper undoubted notes of the great prophet there spoken of, will be most conspicuous in our Saviour, if we compare him, first, with Moses, then with ordinary prophets, according to that difference the Lord himself made between these and Moses; *If there be a prophet of the Lord among you, I will be known to him by a vision, and will speak unto him by dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. Unto him will I speak mouth to mouth, and by vision, not in dark words; but he shall see the similitude of the Lord: wherefore then were*
 511 *ye not afraid to speak against my servant, even against Moses^g?* It is said *signanter*, he should see the *similitude of God*, not God; for as the evangelist saith^h, *no man hath seen God at any time*; so was it told Moses from the Lord's own mouth, *that he could not see his face and live*. Yet saw this great prophet more of God than all the prophets besides. Herein then was Christ like unto him, but far above him, that *he was in the bosom of his Father*, (not admitted to see his back parts only,) *and hath declared him to the world*. Moses, from the abundance of his prophetic spirit, so perfectly foretold the perpetual estate of his people from the law given to the time of their Messias,

^f So Exodus xxiv. God commands Moses to come up to the Lord in the mount, with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, which were to worship afar off, while Moses himself alone went near unto the Lord: so saith St. Peter, God caused Christ to be *shewed openly, not to all the people, but*

to the witnesses chosen before of God, to such as did eat and drink with him, after he arose from the dead. His disciples alone were present when God called Christ into heavenly places. Exod. xxiv. 10, 11.

^g Numb. xii. 6—8.

^h John i. 18.

as the best prophets may seem to be but his scholars. From participation of that fulness which was in Christ, hath that disciple whom he loved far exceeded Moses, as well in the extent, weight, and variety of matters foretold, as in the determinate manner of foretelling them. And I know not whether if it were possible to call both Christ and Moses from heaven, their presence (though more glorious than it was upon mount Tabor) would be more forcible to illuminate the Jew or atheist, than serious reading the books of Deuteronomy and the Revelation, comparing the one with the Jews' known misery, the other with ecclesiastical stories, the late abominations of the papacy, and Romanists' more than Jewish blindness. The one shews Moses to have been the father of prophets; the other, Christ (from whose immensurable fulness John had that extraordinary measure of the Spirit) to be the fountain of prophecies, whose supereminencies and inexhaustible fulness may yet be made more apparent by comparing him, not with Moses the symbol or mean; but with the other extreme, to wit, the rank of lesser prophets.

11. It is rightly observed by the schoolmen, *Lumen propheticum erat aliquantulum ænigmaticum*; these ordinary prophets' illuminations were not so evident or distinct, as certain; they discerned rather the proportion than feature of truth, which they saw but as it were through the cover, or in the case, not in itself. And albeit the event did always prove their answers true, oftentimes in an unexpected sense; yet could they not always give such answers when they pleased. Nor did the light of God's countenance perpetually reside upon them, as the sun's brightness doth by reflexion upon the stars: they had their vicissitude of day and night, daily eclipses, overcastings many; their chief

The gift of prophecy not habitual to ordinary prophets.

illuminations came but as it were by flashes. Thus Jeremy^h, in the late cited controversy, dares not adventure to give the people a sign for confirmation of his doctrine or other more distinct or determinate prediction, besides that of the general event, about which the contention was; that he knew (because the Lord had put it into his mouth) would in the end condemn his adversary of presumption. But after Hananiah had outfaced him with a sensible sign of his own making, breaking the yoke which he had taken from Jeremiah's neck, on which the Lord had put it, and boldly avouched in the presence of all the people, *Thus saith the Lord, even so I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babel from the neck of all nations within the space of two years*ⁱ. The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah again, and sends him back with this message to his adversary, *Hear now, Hananiah; the Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the*
512 *Lord; Behold, I will cast thee from off the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast spoken rebelliously against the Lord. So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month*^k. Not long after this event were both prince and people of Judah rooted out of the land the Lord had given them, because, contrary to Moses' admonition, they revered the prophet that spake presumptuously, and would not hearken unto the words which the Lord put in Jeremiah's mouth: Elisha likewise, to whom Elias had given a double portion of his spirit in respect of his fellows, of all the prophets (unless Elias might be excepted) most famous for the gift of miracles, a lively type of the Messias, in raising from death and giving life, had his spirit of divination but by fits, and

^h Jer. xxviii.ⁱ Jer. xxviii. 11.^k Ver. 12, 15, 16.

needed music to tune his spirits unto it. He gave the barren Shunamite a son, of whose death notwithstanding he knew not, as the Lord of life did of Lazarus, in his absence: nor could he by her unusual gesture or strange signs of sorrow, distinctly divine the true cause of her coming: only, when Gehazi went to thrust her away, he said as much as he knew: *Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told it me*¹.

12. But from the perpetual and internal irradiation of the Deity, bodily or personally (such as the apostle speaks) dwelling in Christ, and incorporate in his substance, this spirit of prophecy (if without prejudice so we may call it) did never wain, was never eclipsed, always most splendent in him, as light in the moon in the full. As he never foretold any thing which came not to pass, so could he at all times when he pleased foretell whatsoever at any time should befall his friends or foes, with all the circumstances and signs consequent or precedent. From this brightness of his glory did John Baptist (who was sent from God as the morning star to usher this Sun of Righteousness into his kingdom) become more than a prophet for distinct illuminations, concerning matters to come. A prophet he was in the womb, and *bare witness of that light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world*, before he came into it himself, or saw this bodily sun; when he could not speak, he danced for joy at his presence, and at his first approach, after baptism, he thus salutes him; *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world*^m. What prophet did ever so distinctly prophesy of his passion, and so fully instruct the people what was foresignified by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb? yet was John himself secured by the

John Baptist more than a prophet, from the vicinity of the great Prophet.

¹ 2 Kings iv. 27.

^m John i. 29.

former rule, that he spake this by the Spirit of the Lord, not out of fancy, not presumptuously. For till this baptism, *he knew him not: but he that sent him to baptize with water, he said unto him, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit come down, and tarry still upon him, that is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And he saw it so come to pass, and bare record that this was the Son of Godⁿ.* From this more than prophetic spirit of John, manifested by this and the like testifications of Christ, all afterwards approved by the event, did the people gather Christ, not John, to be that great Prophet, mighty in word and deed. For after he had escaped the violence offered him at Jerusalem, *and went again beyond Jordan into the place where John first baptized;—many* (saith the Evangelist) *resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle:*
 513 *but all things which John spake of this man were true. And many believed in him there^o;* for his works' sake no doubt, but for these as accompanied with the former circumstances of place, and John's predictions. John had witnessed he was the Son of God, mighty in deed and word: and reason they had to think his works were the works of his Father, that his privileges were the privileges of the only begotten Son, and heir of all things; when John though a prophet, and more than a prophet for his portion of the Divine Spirit, was yet restrained (by reason of his approach that was before him) from doing such wonders as meaner prophets had done. To such as rightly observed this opposition between John's power in words, and his defect in deeds; or Christ's superabundant power in both, the case was plain, John was but the crier, the other (in whose presence his authority decreased) the Lord, whose ways he was sent to prepare^p.

ⁿ John i. 33. See cap. 20. par. 5.

^o John x. 40—42.

^p Is. xl. 3.

13. If unto the variety of Christ's miracles, compared with John's predictions and other prophecies, we join his arbitrary usual manner, either of foretelling future, or knowing present matters of every kind, many such as no prophet durst ever have professed to belong unto himself; our faith may clearly behold the sure foundation whereon it is built, That he, even he himself, who had said by the prophet—*I am the Lord : this is my name : and my glory will I not give unto another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare : before they come forth I tell you of them*^a—did at the fulness of time manifest his glory in our flesh, by the practice there mentioned of foretelling things strange and unheard-of to the world. Prophecies of former times were fulfilled in his personal appearance, and made their period at the beginning of his preaching. Whatsoever concerns the state of the world, chiefly the Gentiles, since, came from him either as altogether new, or was refined and renewed by him. For what man among the nations, yea what master in Israel, did from the Law or Prophets conceive aright of the new birth by water and the Spirit^r, or of that everlasting kingdom, whereunto only men so born are heirs predestinate? These were the *new things*, which he only could distinctly declare before they came forth.

The matter of our Saviour's predictions, compared with the precedent prophecies of him, declare his Godhead.

14. That their Messias was to be this God here spoken of by Isaiah, dwelling and conversing with them in their nature and substance, might have been manifested to the Jews (had they not been hoodwinked with pride and malice) from that common notion even the most vulgar amongst them had of his Divine spirit, in declaring secrets, and foretelling things to come.

Our Saviour's arbitrary discovery of secrets and predictions of futures contingent fully consonant to the received notions of the Messias.

^a Isaiah xlii. 8, 9.

^r John iii. 5.

What one miracle done by Christ did ever take so good effect with so great speed in best prepared spectators, as his discovery of Nathanael's heart in presence, and outward carriage in so great distance? *Rabbi*, (saith Nathanael,) *thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel*^s. Though faith be the true gift of God, only wrought by his Spirit, yet no question but Nathanael was more inclined to this confession from the general notion of the Messias' Divine Spirit; even by it he was capable of that promise, *Habenti dabitur*. And our Saviour highly approves, and so rewards this his docility; *Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these*^t. What were they? miracles? Yes; for so he saith to him and the rest of his hearers: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter*
 514 *shall you see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man*. Then miracles, it seems, were more effectual to confirm faith, than this experience of his prophetic spirit. Not of themselves, but joined with it, or as thus foretold by him, and foresignified by Jacob's vision^u, which compared with the event (whether that were at his ascension or no, I now dispute not) did plainly declare him to be *the way* and *the door* by which all enter into the house of God.

15. Upon the first apprehension of like discovery made by him, did the poor Samaritan woman acknowledge he was a Prophet, and upon his avouching himself to be more than so, she takes him indeed for the expected Messias, of whom she had this conceit before, that *when he came, he should tell them all things*^x. From this preconceived notion, working with her present

^s John i. 49. ^t Ver. 50, 51. ^u Gen. xxviii. 12, 13, 19. ^x John iv. 25.

experience of his Divine Spirit, able to descry all the secrets of her heart, she makes this proclamation to her neighbours ; *Come, and see a man that hath told me all things that ever I did: is not he the Christ* ^y ? Upon their like experience, fully consonant to the same common notion or conceit of the Messias, did a many of that city conceive faith from the woman's report ; but *more because of his own words ; and they said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying : for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world* ^z. From the like but more lively experience of his discovering secrets, did his disciples make that confession, *Now know we that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee : by this we believe that thou art come out from God* ^a.

16. The manifestation of this prophetical Spirit did give life unto his greatest miracles in working faith ; for his disciples believed in him after his resurrection, because he had foretold his reedifying the temple in three days' space. Which speech of his the foolish Jews, not knowing his body to be the true temple, wherein their God did dwell after a more excellent manner than between the cherubims, take as meant of the material temple, which had been forty-six years in building. But (saith St. John ^b) *as soon as he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he thus said unto them ; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.* Nor did they compare these two together by chance ; for our Saviour often inculcated this method, as of purpose to imprint the former oracle of Isaiah in their hearts. To assure them of his going to his Father, he expressly tells

Our Saviour's disciples and apostles did (according to his instructions) more rely upon his predictions than his miracles.

^y John iv. 29. ^z Ver. 42. ^a John xvi. 30. ^b John ii. 22.

them, *Now I have spoken unto you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe^c*. Foretelling the persecution of his disciples, he adds: *These things have I told you, that when the hour shall come, ye might remember that I told you them^d*. That glory likewise which God had professed he would not give to any other, he foretells should be given him, and so demands it, as if he that did glorify and he that was glorified were both one: *Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again^e*. How had he glorified it before? By glorifying this great Prophet, who did fully express, but far exceed Moses, in
 515 all things wherein former prophets did resemble him but came far short of him. When was he so glorified? At his transfiguration upon mount Tabor, which none without sacrilegious impiety could have foretold as likely to befall himself, save he alone, that had, not as Moses, only seen the *similitude of the Lord*, but *being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with him*. Yet this Prophet of whom we speak, though like to his brethren in shape and substance, to assure them he should come in the glory of his Father, foretells his disciples, *that some of them should not die, until they had seen the kingdom of God come with power^f*; which was accomplished in that transfiguration, where, as St. Peter witnesseth^g, *he received of God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice unto him from the excellent glory, This*

^c John xiv. 29.

^d John xvi. 4. Foretelling the fulfilling of that scripture (*He that catcheth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me,*) in Judas; he gave this general rule, *From henceforth tell I you*

before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe that I am he, John xiii. 19.

^e John xii. 28.

^f Mark ix. 1. Matt. xvi. 28. Luke ix. 27.

^g 2 Pet. i. 17.

is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Yea, so well pleased, as for his sake the world might henceforth know how ready he was to hear all that through faith in his name should call upon him, even such as had displeased him most. For this cause, the codicil annexed to the Divine will and testament here signified, immediately after to be sealed with the blood of this best beloved Son, was that reciprocal duty before intimated in the law, *hear him*, as is specified by three evangelists^h. For more public manifestation of his majesty, (as then revealed but to a few,) was that glorious commemoration of it lately mentioned, celebrated again in the audience of the multitude: *This voice, saith our Saviour, came not because of me, but for your sakes*ⁱ. And in that place again, after his wonted predictions of things should after come to pass, as of his victory over death, he testifies aloud to all the people that he was the great Prophet foretold by Moses, sweetly paraphrasing upon his words; *And Jesus cried and said, He that believeth in me, believeth not in me, but in him that sent me.—And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world*^j. He did not accurse such as would not acknowledge his authority, or derogated from his person or miracles; nor needed he so to do: for *he that refuseth him, and receiveth not his words, hath one that judgeth him: the word which he had spoken, it shall judge him in the last day*^k. This was that which Moses had said, *And whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he (the great Prophet) shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*^l—to wit, in the last day of accounts:

^h Mark ix. 7. Luke ix. 35.
Matt. xvii. 5.

ⁱ John xii. 30.

^j John xii. 44. 47.

^k John xii. 48.

^l Deut. xviii. 19.

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should do, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: the things therefore that I speak, I speak them so as the Father said unto me^m. What is this, but that speech of Moses improved to its full value, according to the circumstances and signs of those times, and as it concerned the Lord and Prince of prophets? I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command himⁿ.

Our Saviour's prophetic spirit gave life to his miracles, though his miracles were good preparatives to belief.

17. This being the last conference our Saviour was willing to entertain with the Jews, this his last farewell, given in Moses' words, warrants me to construe that speech of St. John—*Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet believed they not on him^o*—as I have done the like before; to wit, that not his miracles considered alone, but with Mosaical and prophetic writings, or common notions of the Messiah thence conceived, or (especially) as they concurred with his own predictions, did immediately condemn the Jews. Under the name of works, his words are comprehended; such at the least as foretell his admirable works, or in general all those solemn invocations of his Father's name in such predictions, as had he not been the Son of God, would rather have brought speedy vengeance from heaven upon his head than such glorious testimonies of his Divinity. And to me our Saviour seems to call his very words *works*, in that speech to Philip, *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwell-*

^m John xii. 49, 50.

ⁿ Deut. xviii. 18.

^o John xii. 37.

eth in me, he doeth the works^p. Howsoever, as all the works of God were created by this Eternal Word, so did his words give life unto his greatest works; his divinations were to his miracles as his human soul was to his body. And no question but the conception of their faith that heard him preach was as immediately from those *words of eternal life* which issued from his mouth, as ours is from the word preached by his messengers. To what other use then could miracles serve, save only to breed a previal admiration, and make entrance for them into his hearers' hearts? though his bodily presence at all times was not, yet were his usual works in themselves truly glorious; more than apt to dispel that veil of prejudice commonly taken against the meanness of his person, birth, or parentage, had it been merely natural, not occasioned through wilful neglect of extraordinary means precedent, and stubborn opposition to present grace most plentifully offered. His raising others from death to life was more than sufficient to remove that offence the people took at that speech, *If I were lift up from the earth, I should draw all men unto me*^q. To which they answered: *We have heard out of the law that the Christ bideth for ever: and how sayest thou, that the Son of man must be lift up? who is that Son of man?*

18. To conclude then, his distinct and arbitrary foretelling events of every sort any prophet had mentioned, many of them not producible but by extraordinary miracles, withal including Divine testifications of far greater glory ascribed to him than Moses or any prophet ever challenged, was the demonstrative rule (according to Moses' prediction) whereunto all visible signs and sensible miracles should have been resolved

The peculiar similitude between Christ and Moses in the office of mediation.

^p John xiv. 10.

^q John xii. 32.

by their spectators : as known effects lead contemplators unto the first and immediate causes, on which their truth and being depends. That encomium, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear him*, with the like given by John Baptist, *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world*, unto all such as took him for a true Prophet, did more distinctly point out the similitude peculiar to him with Moses, expressed (in the forecited place of Deuteronomy) literally ; though not so plainly as most readers would without direction observe it, seeing even interpreters most followed either neglect the words themselves in which it is directly contained, or wrest their meaning. *Unto him shall ye hearken ; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly*. Their request then was, *Talk thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God talk with us, lest we die*^r. Here the whole multitude bound themselves to hear the word of the Lord, not 517 immediately from his mouth, but by Moses. *For whiles the people stood afar off, he only drew near to the darkness where God was*. This their request and resolution, elsewhere more fully expressed, the Lord highly commended : *I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee : they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, to fear me, and to keep all my commandments alway, that it might go well with them, and with their children for ever*^s ! If we observe that increment, the literal sense of the same words may receive by succession of time, or as they respect the body, not the type, both which they jointly signify ; the best reason can be given of God's approving the former petition and Israel's peculiar dis-

^r Deut. xviii. 15, 16.^s Deut. v. 28, 29.

position at that time above others, will be this : That as posterity in rejecting Samuel^t rejected Christ, or God the second Person in Trinity ; so here the fathers in requesting Moses might be their spokesman unto God, requested that great Prophet ordained to be the Author of a better covenant, even that promised woman's Seed, their brother according to the flesh, to be Mediator betwixt God and them, to secure them from such dreadful flames as they had seen, so they would hearken (as then they promised) unto his words, as unto the words of God himself, esteeming him (as the apostle saith) so far above Moses, *as he that builds the house is above the house*^u. And in the emphasis of that speech, *Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*^v, purposely resumed by Moses with these threats annexed, as if he had not sufficiently expressed his mind in the like precedent, *unto him ye shall hearken*, the same difference between Moses and the great Prophet then meant is included, which the apostle in another place expresseth—*He that despiseth Moses' law dieth without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, he shall be worthy, which treadeth under foot the Son of God, and counteth the blood of the testament as an unholy thing*^x ? Until the sovereignty of the Law and Prophets did determine, that encomium of Moses did bear date, *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face*^y ; but vanished upon the Crier's voice, when the *kingdom of heaven* began to appear. The Israelites, to whom both promises were made, did far exceed

^t Vide lib. 1. cap. 28. parag.
8—10.

^u Heb. iii. 3.

^v Deut. xviii. 19.

^x Heb. x. 28, 29.

^y Deut. xxxiv. 10.

all other nations, in that they had a law most absolute given by Moses, yet to be bettered by an everlasting covenant; the former being as an earnest penny given in hand to assure them of the latter. In respect of both, the name of a soothsayer or sorcerer was not to be heard in Israel, as in the nations which knew not God, much less expected a mediator in whom the spirit of life should dwell as plentifully as splendour doth in the body of the sun; from whose fulness, ere he visibly came into the world, other prophets were illuminated, (as those lights which rule the night are by that great light which God hath appointed to rule the day,) at whose approach the prince of darkness with his followers were to avoid the hemisphere wherein they had reigned. In the meantime, the testimonies of the law and prophecies served as a light or candle to minish the terrors of the night. Even Moses himself, and all that followed him, were but as messengers sent from God to solicit his people to reserve their allegiance free from all commerce or compact with familiar spirits, until the Prince of glory came in person.

518 19. Thus without censure of their opinion that otherwise think or teach, albeit the continuance of prophets amongst this people were a mean to prevent all occasions of consulting sorcerers or witches, yet the chief ground of Moses' dissuasion from such practices, according to the literal connection of these words—*The nations, which thou shalt possess, hearken unto those that regard the times, and unto sorcerers: as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so^z*—with those following hitherto expounded—*the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet*—was the consideration of their late mighty deliverance by Moses, the excellency

The chief grounds of Moses' dissuading Israel from sorcery was their expectation of the great prophets.

^z Deut. xviii. 14.

of their present law, and their expectation of a greater lawgiver, (when the first covenant should wax old, and prophecies for a long time fail,) unto strict observance of whose precepts they solemnly bound themselves (as was lately observed) ever whilst the former was established. That which moves me to embrace this interpretation, is Balaam's prophecy uttered of Israel, considered in the abstract as he might have been, not as he proved, (as Malachi^a speaks of Levi,) or according to the excellency of his calling in Moses and in Christ, or God's promise, which he for his part was ready to perform; *God brought them* (saith he) *out of Egypt; their strength is as an unicorn. For there is no sorcery in Jacob, nor soothsaying in Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob, What hath God wrought!*^b And in the chapter following^c, he joins Israel's deliverance from Egypt as the foundation or beginning; and his victory in Christ, as the accomplishment or finishing of his glory. Of that Jacob meant by Balaam, even we Gentiles are a part, every way as strictly bound by Moses' law, as Israel was to abandon soothsaying and sorcery, but especially bound to abhor these and like works of darkness, from that light the star of Jacob hath afforded us. These two great prophets, then, Christ and Moses, appointed suc-

^a Chap. i.

^b Num. xxiii. 22.

^c *God brought him out of Egypt; his strength shall be as an unicorn: he shall eat the nations his enemies, and bruise their bones, and shoot them through with his arrows. He coucheth, and lieth down as a young lion, and as a lion, who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curs-eth thee. I shall see him, but not*

now: I shall behold him, but not near: there shall come a star of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise of Israel, and shall smite the coasts of Moab, and destroy all the sons of Sheth. And Edom shall be possessed, and Seir shall be a possession to their enemies; but Israel shall do valiantly. He also that shall have dominion shall be of Jacob, and shall destroy the remnant of the city. Numb. xxiv. 8, 9. and 17—19.

cessively to declare God's will unto his people, were the main supporters of true religion in Israel, by whose doctrine all curious and superstitious arts were to vanish. And if my observation fail not, Israel was much less given to sorcery after ordinary prophets ceased, than before; because this great Prophet, the hope of Israel, was at hand.

That our Saviour's authority might have been and was more manifestly proved out of Moses and the prophets to the ancient, than it can be to the modern Jews, altogether unacquainted with the right manner of interpreting prophecies, or such common

20. The apprehension of what we now by long search hardly find, was more facile to the ancient Jews, from the known conceits, or received traditions thereto pertinent. Before the law was written, one they had heard should be sent from God, a mighty deliverer of his people; unto whom Moses thought himself much inferior, as appears by his reply to God, when he was first sent to visit his brethren: *Mitte, quæso, quem missurus es; Send, I pray thee, whom thou wilt send*^d: as if he said, One thou hast appointed from everlasting, to declare thy name unto his brethren, to shew mercy to thy people, and thy power upon thine enemies; and I beseech thee send him now, for this is work befitting his strength, not my weak-

519ness. From the like notions or received opinions did the Pharisees understand this place, as meant of the prophet that was to come: albeit it may be doubted, whether they took him to be the same with the Messiah. For so they demand of John severally; *Art thou the Christ? Art thou Eliah? Art thou the prophet*^e? Eliah was plainly distinguished from the Messiah by Isaiah; or perhaps they knew the Messiah and the Prophet to be the same: yet, like strict examiners, proposed these two several names, to leave John no evasion. It was likewise a truth presupposed and known, at least amongst the Pharisees^f, that Eliah,

^d Exod iv. 13.

^e John i. 20, 21.

^f Some interpreters observe that St. John doth purposely in-

notions or traditions, as the Scribes and Pharisees had in our Saviour's time.

Messias, the Prophet, one or all, should baptize. Hence they further question the Baptist; *Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, neither Elias, nor the prophet?* And of himself he saith, *Because he* (to wit, the Christ) *should be declared to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water*^h. This answer, with his practice permitted by the Pharisees, and approved by the people, so fully concurring with the former notion, but especially his prediction of Christ's baptizing *with the Holy Ghost*, and (as St. Matthew adds) *with fire*ⁱ, were most pregnant testimonies against unbelievers, after they had notice of the Holy Ghost's descending (upon the same day their law was given) from heaven: for the plentiful manner of effusion, and placid illapse into the souls of every sort, resembling water poured out; (as the prophet's phrase imports^k;) but for outward appearance, and inward effects of ardent zeal, like unto fire. And likely it is, as well the pillar of fire^l which enlightened Israel by night, as the cloud that rested upon the tabernacle, under which (St. Paul saith^m) the fathers being, *were baptized in it*, were such preluding types of baptism by water and the Holy Ghost, as the rock was of Christ, or the waters thence flowing, of those springs of life which issue from him, to the refreshing of every faithful thirsty soul. The mystical significations of such shadows of good things to come were sufficiently known to the Jews living in our Saviour's time. Whence (as the two judicious commentators, Bucer and Martyr, observe) his adversaries' mouths were instantly stopped, at

sert these words; *Now they which were sent were of the Pharisees*, John i. 24; though other evangelists call them only Levites, to notify unto us that this was a tradition known unto that sect.

^g John i. 25.

^h Verse 31.

ⁱ Matt. iii. 11.

^k Joel ii. 28.

^l Exod xiii. 21, 22.

^m 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

the first allegation of those places the modern Jews bark most against, as not inferring what the evangelists report their forefathers granted : because these had a peculiar manner of interpreting scriptures not acknowledged by the latter, grown out of use for the most part amongst Christians, or rather overgrown with the abuse of luxuriant allegories, and mystical senseless senses, framed by monkish or rather apish imitation of orthodoxal antiquity. The weeding out of such tares, as, through these bad husbands' sloth and negligence, have abounded in God's harvest, will not (we trust) be either difficult or dangerous to the good seed primitive antiquity hath sown : whose general method and manner of interpreting prophecies, (though in particulars it often fail ; partly, through adventurous imitation of some philosophers in unfolding heathenish mysteries ; partly, through want of skill in the original tongues,) holds the just mean between barbarous postillers, and some late preachers, worthily famous, yet too nice and scrupulous in this subject, as shall appear when we come to handle it.

Our Saviour's prediction of his death
 520
 and resurrection, was that which according to Moses' prophecy did most condemn the Jews.

21. But to finish what we had last in hand, the most remarkable, most public document our Saviour gave to unbelievers, of his designment to that great office foretold by Moses, was the constant avouchment of his death and resurrection, unto such as so well observed his words, that after they had taken away his life, procured a strong watch to be set about his sepulchre, lest his disciples should take his body thence, and by emptying it, seem to fulfil his prophecyⁿ. Nor did he once only, but twice foretell^o, not barely he would rise again, but that thus much was presignified by the prophet Jonah's three days' imprisonment in the whale's belly ; thus inviting them to observe all congruity of

ⁿ Matt., xxvii. 63.

^o Matt. xii. 39. Matt. xvi. 4.

circumstance between the historical type already exhibited, and the substance prophesied : which method, as hereafter (God willing) will appear, is of all the best for insinuating faith into superstitious, perverse, and crooked hearts, otherwise most unapt to receive truths late revealed. Since Christ's glorification, sundry impostors have done many works, hardly distinguishable by spectators from true miracles : but the end of all their purposes, which they sought thence to persuade, was always so dissonant to the uncorrupt notions, precedent types, or prophecies of the Messiah ; as, unto hearts well settled, and surely grounded upon scriptures formerly established and confirmed, their greatest wonders seemed but apish toys, howsoever *difficiles nugæ*. And some of these jugglers, either out of the strength of their own illusions, or upon the presumption of their profane skill in deceiving others, have adventured to foretell their resurrection ; but were not able to dissolve the bands of death ; their everlasting durance in whose prisons hath openly shewed they spake presumptuously ; that not Mahomet himself, the greatest of them, was that great Prophet foretold by Moses. What was the reason then the Jews would not, the Turks unto this day will not, believe in Christ crucified ? *For the inhabitants of Jerusalem*, St. Paul hath answered, *because they knew him not, nor yet the words of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him*^p. The same apostle, though endued with the power of miracles, yet in that place rather useth David's words than his own works to prove Christ's resurrection. Of which, that saying of Christ was most truly verified in the obstinate Jews' *not hearing Moses and the prophets*, (so as to be moved by them to true repent-

^p Acts xiii. 27.^q Luke xvi. 31.

ance,) *neither were they persuaded, though this great prophet of whom they wrote was raised from the dead again.*

22. Were we well acquainted either with that manner of interpretation, or those prenotions the apostle supposed as known when he used that testimony of the Psalmist, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*^r, to prove our Saviour's resurrection; it would not be hard to persuade us Moses' words hitherto expounded were as literally meant of God's raising his Son out of his maiden grave, as out of his virgin-mother's womb. And I make no question but the conclusion of St. Peter's sermon, *Unto you* (whom a little before he had termed children of the prophets) *hath God raised up his Son*^s, were meant by him of his raising Christ from the dead. And yet are these words but an application of the former principal text he there insists upon: *Moses said unto the fathers, The Lord your God shall raise up unto you a prophet even of your brethren, like unto me; ye shall hear him all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you*^t. And unto this resurrection doth the strict propriety of that phrase, *from* 521 *the midst of thee*^u, well agree. *For these things were not done in a corner*^v, but in Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judæa, not without express notice given to the rulers. Moses indeed foretold his own death, and whatsoever prophets (raised up by God unto this people) did foretell, came still to pass; yet none ever foretold his own raising up. But seeing Christ's first raising from the virgin's womb, though most miraculous, was yet more private; he forewarned the world to expect this second, altogether as powerful but more

^r Acts xiii. 33. Psalm ii. 7.

^u Deut. xviii. 15.

^s Acts iii. 26.

^v Acts xxvi. 26.

^t Verse 22.

public. And in it again he is like to Moses, raised up by God, to be a Saviour of his people, out of that ark which without Divine especial providence had been his tomb. This similitude, amongst the rest, betwixt Christ and Moses, as well in their later as first birth, but especially the notice our Saviour gave unto his enemies of the later, hath made them unwittingly prophets to their woe. For seeing it hath left their unbelief without excuse, *their last error*, concerning his resurrection, *is become worse than the first*, concerning his birth^x. Neither could have seemed incredible (though both most miraculous) to this ungracious seed of Jacob, *had they looked* (as the prophet willed them) *unto the rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged*^y. The mighty increase of Sarah's womb, no better than dead, and strange multiplication of Isaac's seed beyond the posterity of all the people with whom he sojourned, did but portend the fruitful offspring of the virgin's only Son should in number and dignity far surmount the sons and daughters of all the fertile mothers in Judæa. Isaac's posterity had been great, yet able to be numbered by David. *But his generation who shall declare, that was cut out of the land of the living*^z? *Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as dead*, (or destined to death, as Isaac was; *yea of one truly dead, that made his grave with the wicked*,) *as many as the stars in the sky in multitude* (in dignity greater) *and as the sand by the sea shore innumerable*^a. Mightier was the increase of that rock wherein he made his grave whence we are hewn, than of that pit whence Israel according to the flesh was digged. His exaltation since hath been their fall. For seeing they would

^x Matt. xxvii. 64.^z Isaiah liii. 8.^y Isaiah li. 1.^a Heb. xi. 12.

not believe his predictions, as their lawgiver had commanded, the world may clearly see the curse indefinitely there denounced against all such as *would not hear*, fulfilled upon that stubborn generation, according to the full extent of St. Peter's paraphrase^b upon it, not one or a few only were destroyed out of the people, (as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for disobedience unto Moses,) but the whole people or nation were utterly rooted out of the land. All which, with all particular circumstances and signs precedent or ensuing, this great prophet in his lifetime had so distinctly foretold, that if we compare former prophets with him they may seem to have but dreamed; he alone, that put these unknown ditties into their heads, to have had the perfect skill of right interpreting their meaning.

That the Method used by the great Prophet himself after his Resurrection for planting Faith, was such as we teach: the Excess of Antichrist's Exaltation above Christ: the diametrical Opposition betwixt the Spirit of God and the Spirit of the Papacy.

1. MOSES was to be acknowledged a great prophet, because the whole host of Israel infallibly knew the Lord was with him in all he did; every prophet after him to be known by the rules which he had given for their discernment; Christ Jesus to be taken for the great Prophet and Mediator of the everlasting covenant, because in words, in works, in all his ways, exactly answerable to Mosaical and prophetic characters of the Messiah that was to come. This sweet harmony of legal types or ancient prophecies, as well with the whole course of his blessed life, as with his ignomini-

^b Acts iii. 23. *For it shall be, not hear that prophet, shall be that every person, which shall destroyed out of the people.*

ous and cruel death, or manner of his glorious resurrection, I should either have esteemed or regarded less, had not my Saviour himself preferred the assurance of prophetic testimonies before the certainty of their senses that had conversed with him in their lifetime, admitted to conference with him after his rising from the dead. For so we read of two disciples which had seen his miracles, heard his doctrine, and acknowledged him for *a Prophet, mighty in word and deed*; but yet distrusted the report of his resurrection, after it had been the second time confirmed by such of their fellows as had doubted with them: yea, their Master himself had told them as much before his death. And had he not good reason then to upbraid them with distrust, having now met them as live-like as they themselves were? Was he to them *a prophet mighty in word and deed*, and yet not able to perform what he had constantly spoken? But what was the chief matter of their just reproof? that they had not believed his words, nor given due credence to his works? Dull, no doubt, they had been, in not esteeming better of both; unwise, in not learning more of him, that taught as never man taught; but (as in them he teacheth us) most dull and most unwise, even *fools, and slow of heart in not believing all that the prophets had spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things*, (as if he had said, Is it possible your ignorance in them should be so gross, as not to know that Christ was thus to suffer,) *and so to enter into his glory*?

2. You will say, perchance, they did not well in giving so little attention and credit to the prophets, whose light should have led them unto Christ: but now that they have light on him in person without their help, only by his seeking them, shall not he who was the end and

^c Luke xxiv. 25.

scope of all prophetical writings, teach them all? He will: but not by relying only upon his infallible authority. This edifice of faith must be framed upon the foundation laid by the prophets. For this reason haply our Saviour would not bewray himself to be their infallible Teacher, until he had made them by evidence of scripture, by true sense and feeling of
 523 his Spirit, believe and know the truth, which he taught to be infallible. He had opened their hearts by opening the scriptures unto them, before their eyes were open to discern his person; for *he began at Moses and at all the prophets, and interpreted unto them in all the scriptures the things which were written of him^d*. Steadfast belief then of any man's authority must spring out of the solid experience of his skill, and truth of his doctrine. These two disciples might now resolve their hearts that this was he who John said *should baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*; when by the working of his Spirit *their hearts did burn within them, whiles he talked with them, and opened the scriptures unto them^e*. Though before they had received John Baptist's witness of the truth, as a tie or test to stay their fleeting faith; yet now they would *not receive the record of man*; *there is another that beareth witness of him, the Spirit of truth^f*, which hath imprinted his doctrine in their hearts.

3. Would the pope, who challengeth Christ's place on earth amongst his living members, and requires we should believe his words as well as these disciples did Christ's, but expound those scriptures unto us which Christ did to them, with like evidence and efficacy; could he make our hearts thus *burn* within, by opening the secret mysteries of our salvation; we would take him for Christ's vicar, and believe indeed he were

^d Luke xxiv. 27.^e Ver. 32.^f John v. 32. 34.

infallibly assisted by the Holy Spirit. But seeing he and his followers invert our Saviour's method, by calling the certainty of both testaments in question, telling us we cannot know them to be God's word, unless it shall please this Roman god to give his word for them, or confirm their truth; seeing this his pretended confirmation is not by manifesting the mysteries of our salvation so distinctly and clearly as Christ did unto these disciples, nor by affording us the true sense and feeling of the Spirit in such ardent manner as they enjoyed it, and yet accurseth us if we believe not his words as well as they did their Redeemer's; we may hence take a perfect measure of that *mouth of blasphemies* spoken of by St. John, according to all the three dimensions contained in the three assertions prefixed to the beginning of this section. Nor can the reader imagine either any other forepast like unto it, or yet to come, likely to prove more abominable; if it shall but please him to survey the length and breadth of it, but especially the profundity.

A brief survey of the mouth of blasphemies spoken of by St. John.

4. The length of it I make that assertion—The pope must be as well believed as either Christ was whilst he lived on earth, or his apostles after his glorification. The breadth—His absolute authority must be for extent as large and ample as Christ's should be, were he on earth again; or as that commission he gave unto his disciples, *Go, preach the gospel to every creature: his directions must go forth throughout all the earth, and his words unto the ends of the world.* The depth is much greater than the space between heaven and hell. For if you would draw a line from the zenith to the nadir through the centre, it would scarce be a gag long enough for this monstrous mouth; so wide, as hell cannot conceive a greater. The depth I gather, partly from the excess of Christ's worth, either arising

from his personal union with the Godhead, his sanctity of life and conversation, or from his hyperprophetical spirit and abundant miracles. For look how much he exceeds any but mere man in all these; by so much
 524 doth the pope (though supposed as not obnoxious to any crime) make his authority and favour with God greater than Christ's, which is the semidiameter of this *mouth of blasphemies*. The other part, equal hereunto in quantity, but for the quality more tainted with the dregs of hell, ariseth from that opposition the pope's spirit hath unto Christ, or from the luxury and beastly manners of the papacy, erected by Satan as it were of purpose to pollute the world with monstrous sins, and to derogate as much from mankind as true Christianity doth advance it: finally, to make the Christian world as much more wicked, as Christ's disciples, apostles, and faithful followers are better than the heathen. Nor doth the pope exact belief only without miracles or manifestation of a prophetical spirit; but contrary to all notions of good and evil common to Christians and heathens, and as it were in despite of the prophecies that have deciphered him for Antichrist. What heathen philosopher could with patience have endured to hear, that a dissolute luxurious tyrant could not, though in matters of this life, give wrong sentence out of the seat of justice? The Jesuits teach it as an article of faith, that the pope, albeit a dissolute and ungracious tyrant, mankind's reproach, the disgrace of Christianity, cannot possibly give an erroneous sentence *ex cathedra*, no not in mysteries of religion. But as if it were a small thing thus impudently to contradict nature, and grieve the souls of ingenuous men, unless *they also grieve their God*^g, seeking as it were to cross his Spirit by holding opinions, not only contradictory,

The chief arguments brought by Romish writers to prove the excellency of their church, directly contrary to the principles of sense and nature.

^g Isaiah vii. 13.

but most contrary to his sacred rules ; they importune the Christian world with tumultuous clamours, to take that, which the Spirit hath given as the demonstrative character of great Antichrist, the old serpent's chief confederate, for the infallible cognizance of Christ's vicar, the very signet of his beloved spouse. Nor will they, (I know,) though friendly admonished, cease henceforth to urge their outworn arguments, drawn from antiquity, universality ; from that reverence and allegiance which most kingdoms of Europe have for these thousand years and more borne to the see of Rome ; or from the bloody victories over all other inferior churches or private spirits, that have oppugned her. These or the like allegations in their judgment abundantly prove their church to be Christ's best beloved, the pope to be his deputy, or rather his corrvial here on earth, whose words sound as the word of God, and not of man ; albeit the Spirit hath plainly foretold, that *the beast which had his power from the dragon, and should open his mouth unto blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, should have power given withal to make war with the saints, and to overcome them ; yea, over every kindred, tongue, and nation : so as all that dwell upon the earth should worship him, whose names were not written in the book of life of the Lamb which was slain from the beginning of the world*^h.

5. To the Jesuits' brags, that no visible church since the world began did either spread itself so far, or flourish so long as theirs hath done, I only oppose that of our Saviour, *Ex tuo ipsius ore judicabere serve nequam*, "Thine own confession shall condemn thee, 525 thou bonds slave of Satan." For if the Romish hierarchy

^h Rev. xiii. 4, &c.

be or hath been in the world's eye the most potent and flourishing that ever was, this description of the beast's power cannot agree so well to any as unto it. Nor doth the scripture any where intimate the true church militant should domineer over all nations, or be so triumphantly victorious, as they boast theirs hath been. To think the Antichrist whom they expect should in three years' space subdue as many nations as have been tributary to the see of Rome, is a conceit that justifies the Jew as well in his credulity of things to come which are impossible, as in his hypocritical partiality towards his present estate, which he never suspects of apostasy. Unto this observation the reader may add other like descriptions of this scarlet whore, all so fitly agreeing to the papacy, as he that will not acknowledge it for the kingdom of great Antichrist, hath great reason to suspect his heart, that if he had lived with our Saviour he would scarce have taken him for his Messias; nor can the Jesuits bring any better reasons why the pope should not be the Antichrist, than the Jews did why Christ should not be the great Prophet. Yet this I say, not to discourage such as doubt whether the pope be that man of sin; or to bring them out of love with their belief, which may be sound without express or actual acknowledgment of this truth, not as yet revealed unto them: as those two disciples, no doubt, were neither hypocrites nor infidels, albeit they mistrusted the report of Christ's resurrection; for they were further from approving the practices of the Jews against him, than from actual acknowledgment of it. If any man thus doubt whether the pope be Antichrist, so he do not approve his hatred and war against God's saints, or his other devilish practices, God's peace be upon him; and in good time I trust his eyes shall be enlightened to see the truth in this particular, as

those two disciples did in the article of the resurrection.

6. Seeing we have proved the pope's authority so far to exceed Christ, it may seem needless to compare it with the apostles. Yet lest any Jesuit should except, that their authority might be greater after their Master's glorification than his was before; let us a while examine what they assumed unto themselves, what they gave unto the scriptures before extant.

CHAP. XXIII.

526

That the Authority attributed to the present Pope, and the Romish Rule of Faith, were altogether unknown unto St. Peter: the Opposition betwixt St. Peter's and his pretended Successors' Doctrine.

1. To begin with St. Peter, the first supposed to be installed in this see of Rome. It may be presumed that this supremacy over his fellow apostles, were it any, was in his lifetime, whiles his miracles were fresh, and the extraordinary efficacy of his ministry daily manifested, as well known amongst the faithful as the pope's now amongst Roman catholics. If necessary it had been to acknowledge him or his successors as a second rock or foundation, the commendation of this doctrine unto posterity had been most requisite at the time he wrote his Second Epistle, as *knowing then the time was at hand he should lay down his tabernacle*ⁱ; when he endeavoured his auditors might have remembrance of his former doctrine, to *make their calling and election sure*. If ever there had been a fit season for notifying the necessity of the see apostolic's infallibility, all the circumstances of this place witness this was it. ^kIf any, they to whom he wrote were most bound to obey it: their faith had been planted

ⁱ 2 Pet. i. 14.^k Ver. 1.

by him ; his present intent and purpose was, more and more to confirm them in the truth wherein they were in some measure established. And being thus mindful, will he not make choice of means most effectual to prevent heresy or apostasy? What are these then? absolute reposal in his and his successors' infallibility? Had this been the best rule of faith, he knew his fault were inexcusable for not prescribing it to such as most willingly would have used it. His personal testimony and authority was, I confess, as great as any mortal man's could be ; with his own eyes he had beheld *the majesty of our Lord Christ*¹, whom he preached unto them. If any trust there be in human senses, this saint of God could not possibly be deceived. If any credence to be given unto miracles or sanctity of life, his flock might rest assured he would not deceive, his works so witness the sincerity of his doctrine ; or if his eye were not, in these his auditors' judgments, sufficient witnessess of this truth, he further assures them, when his Lord *received of God the Father honour and glory, there came such a voice unto him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, saith he, we heard, when it came from heaven, (being not afar off,) but with him in the mount*^m. If St. Peter's seat or chair had been as the pole-star, whereto our belief, as the mariner's needle, should be directed, lest we float we know not whither in the ocean of opinions ; were the bosom of the visible church the safest harbour our souls in all storms of temptation could thrust into, this apostle was either an unskilful pilot, or an uncharitable man, that would not before his death instruct them in this course for the eternal safety of their souls, whose bodily lives he might have commanded to

¹ 2 Pet. i. 16.^m Ver. 17.

have saved his own. Had perpetual succession in his see, or apostolical tradition never interrupted, been 527 such an Ariadne's thread as now it is thought, to guide us through the labyrinth of errors; such was St. Peter's love to truth, that he would have so fastened it to all faithful hearts, as none should ever have failed to follow it, in following which he could not err. Doubtless, had any such conceit lodged in his breast, this discourse had drawn it out, his usual form of exhortation had been too mild, his ordinary style too low. This doctrine had been proclaimed to all the world with anathemas, as loud and terrible as the canons of any papistical council report.

2. But he followed no such *deceitful fables*, when *he opened unto them the power and coming of Christⁿ*, whose majesty as he had seen with his own eyes, so would he have others to see him too. But by what light? By scriptures. What scriptures? *Peter, feed my sheep?* Nay, but by the light of prophecy. That is a light indeed in itself, but unto private spirits it is no better (saith Valentian^o) than a light put under a bushel, unless the visible church do hold it out. Where did the visible church keep residence in those days? In St. Peter, I trow. How chances it then he saith not, Fix your eyes on mine, that have seen the glory of the Lord, and the prophets' light shall shine unto you? If by his commendation and proposal it were to shine, he had said better thus: Ye do well in that you give heed unto me, as to your only infallible teacher, that must confirm you in the truth of prophetic writings, and cause them shine in your hearts: but now he saith, 2 Pet. i. 19, *Ye do well in that ye take heed unto the prophets, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day star arise in*

ⁿ 2 Pet. i. 16.

^o Vide lib. 2. cap. 16. parag. 6.

Prophetical
predictions
of Christ
surer
grounds of
faith than
the live
testimonies
of the apo-
stles, that
had seen
Christ, and
conversed
with him.

your hearts. This light of prophets illuminated the eyes of Peter's faith, albeit with his bodily eyes he had seen Christ's glory. For speaking comparatively of that testimony which he had heard in the mount, he adds, *We have also a surer word^v of the prophets.* That the Lord hath been glorified in the mount, his auditors were to take upon his credit and authority; nor could he make them to see this particular, as he himself had done: but that Christ Jesus whom he saw glorified in the mount was the Lord of glory, he had *βεβαιότερον λόγον*, a surer testimony than his bodily sense, the light of prophets. This then was the commendations of his flock, that they looked upon it which shined as well unto them as him; to all, without respect of persons, that take heed unto it; able to bring them, not to acknowledge Peter's infallibility, but to the day star itself, whose light would further ascertain them even of the truth the prophets and the apostles taught. For Christ is in a peculiar manner the first and the last in the edifice of faith, the lowest and the highest stone in the corner, refused by the master builders or visible pillars of the Jewish church: their faith was not grounded upon the prophets, *whose words they knew not*; and not knowing them, they knew not him: but unto such as raise their faith by this *βεβαιότερον λόγον*, the true square and line, Christ is both the fundamental rock which supporteth, and the chief corner stone that binds the whole house of God, and preserves it from clefts and ruptures.

3. But lest his followers might look amiss upon this

P Amplectendus est commentarius qui interpretatur in hunc modum, habemus firmiorem, id est, certiore, et compertiore—Id enim temporis sermo prophe-

tarum spectatior erat, et latius receptus quam sermo apostolorum et evangelistarum.—Sasbout in 2 Pet. cap. i. [ad finem.]

prophetical light, rightly esteemed in the general, St. Peter^a thought it necessary to advertise them, not to content themselves with every interpretation, or accustomed acknowledgment of their truth, grounded on other relations, reports, or skill in expounding them,⁵²⁸ or multitude of voices that way swaying. This had been as if a man that hath eyes of his own should believe there was a moon or stars, because a great many of his honest neighbours had told him so. A thousand witnesses in such a case as this were but private testimonies, in respect of that distinct knowledge which every one may have that list. That the Lord should preserve light in Goshen, when darkness had covered the whole face of Egypt besides, seems unto me less strange, but more sensibly true, than before; whilst I consider how in this age, wherein the light of his countenance hath so clearly shined throughout those parts of Europe whence the gospel came to us, Ingoldstadt should still sit in darkness, environed with the shadow of death. That her great professor Valentian, born, I take it, within these fourscore years, should grope at noonday, as if he had been brought forth in the very midnight of popery, or died well nigh three hundred years ago. Scarce Scotus himself, not Ockam (questionless) though shut up in a prison, where no light of any expositor had ever come, could have made a more dunstical collection of the apostle's words than he hath done. "St. Peter meant one of these three: first, that there can be no certain or probable way of expounding Scriptures by our proper wit or industry: or secondly, that one or other place of scripture cannot be rightly expounded by human wit or industry, but so compared they rightly may: or thirdly, that the scriptures cannot certainly and infal-

^a 2 Pet. i. 19.

libly be expounded every where without the sentence of some other common infallible authority, which in this respect is to be held as judge of faith in the church. The apostle" (he infers) "did not mean the first or second, *ergo*, the third. So as the force and wisdom of the apostolical admonition is this ; No man by his private industry or study, howsoever employed," (either he thought not of the Holy Ghost's direction or assistance, or did not except it,) "no, not by any search of scriptures itself, can certainly and infallibly understand the doctrine of scriptures, in controversies," (of which St. Peter in that place speaks not one word,) "but it is necessary he learn this of some other public authority in the church, by which the Holy Ghost speaks publicly, and teacheth all." His reason follows more dunstical than the collections itself : "For the apostle straight subjoins, *As the holy men of God did speak in scriptures, not by human authority but Divine* ; so
 529 likewise cannot the scriptures be possibly understood by any human or private industry of this or that man, but by some other authority, likewise Divine, by which the Holy Spirit, which is the Author of scriptures, may be likewise the most certain Interpreter of scriptures^r."

^r Cum tam serio ac graviter admonuit beatus Petrus, *ut hoc inprimis intelligeremus quod omnis, inquit, prophetia scripturæ, propria interpretatione non sit.*
 2 Pet. i. aliquid e tribus significare voluit ; nempe, 1. aut non posse ullo modo, scilicet, certo vel probabili, exponi scripturam propria industria et ingenio : aut 2. non posse certo quidem exponi unum aut alterum scripturæ locum ex ingenio proprio, sine collatione aliorum scripturæ lo-

corum, cum ea vero collatione posse : aut 3. non posse certo quidem et infallibiliter ubique eam exponi sine sententia alicujus alterius communis et infallibilis autoritatis, quæ proinde in ecclesia fit fidei judex. Sed nec primum nec secundum significare voluit, ergo tertium ; non quidem primum, nam constat multa passim scripturæ loca esse probabiliter exposita a sanctis patribus, propria eorum ingenii solertia atque industria. Non

4. Had another read thus much unto me, and bid me read the author or his works wherein it was found, I should presently have named either Erasmus' *Moriæ Encomium*, Frishlin's *Priscianus Vapulans*, or some such like comedian, disposed in merriment to pen some old dunce's part. Cannot the Sun of righteousness infuse his heavenly influence by the immediate operation of his Spirit? or doth his influence want force without conjunction with this blazing comet or falling star? Was it not the authority of this Spirit which made St. Peter himself to be so authentic in his doctrine? Is it not the pretended privilege of the same Spirit which exempts the pope from privateness, and makes his authority ecumenical and infallible? Whosoever then by participation of this Spirit understands

Participation of that Spirit by which the scriptures were written makes private men's interpretations of them not private, but authentic.

etiam secundum, nempe ut non putet aliquis se posse unum aut alterum scripturæ locum ingenio proprio infallibiliter ac certo exponere, non consultis et collatis aliis scripturæ locis. Nam quis omnino hæreticorum hoc putat? Aut quid opus erat hoc tam serio admonere? Item, si unum aut alterum scripturæ locum ingenio sensuque proprio interpretari certo nemo potest, quanto minus locos scripturæ plures, inter quos collatio instituitur? Unde ipse D. Petrus: *Omnis*, inquit, *prophetia scripturæ*, &c. Non dicit, *Hæc*, aut *illa tantum*; sed absolute ac sine ulla exceptione, *Omnis prophetia scripturæ, propria interpretatione non fit*. Restat igitur ut tertium illud, quod diximus, significaverit hoc loco D. Petrus: nempe ut vis atque sapientia hujus apostolicæ monitionis sit, Neminem privato suo labore atque proprio studio, quacunque demum ratione, atque

adeo etiam ne ex ipsa quidem scriptura, doctrinam scripturæ certo ac infallibiliter in contrariis quæstionibus intelligere posse; sed opus esse ut discat ex aliqua autoritate in ecclesia communi, per quam Spiritus Sanctus communiter loquatur, ac omnes doceat. Nam ut ipse apostolus ibidem subjungit, *quæ admodum non autoritate humana, sed divina, locuti in scripturis sunt sancti Dei homines*; ita etiam non humana ac propria industria hujus vel illius hominis ullo modo, ne ex ipsa quidem scriptura, sententia scripturæ certo cognoscenda est, sed ex aliqua autoritate, item divina, per quam ipse Spiritus Sanctus, qui scripturæ author est, sit etiam certissimus scripturæ interpres. Ita fit, ut sola scriptura non sufficiat nobis ad certo dijudicandas fidei quæstiones.—Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. disp. 1. quæst. 1. de obj. fid. punct. 7. §. 9.

the prophecies, either immediately, or expounded by others whomsoever, his conceit of them or their right interpretation is not private, but authentic. And Canus^s, though a papist, expressly teacheth, "that the immediate ground or formal reason of ours and the apostles' belief must be the same;" both so immediately and infallibly depending upon the testimony of the Spirit, as if the whole world beside should teach the contrary, yet were every Christian bound to stick unto that inward testimony which the Spirit hath given him. Though the church or pope should expound them to us, we could not infallibly believe his expositions, but by that Spirit by which he is supposed to teach: so believing, we could not infallibly teach others the same; for it is the Spirit only that so teacheth all. The inference then is as evident as strong; That *private* in the forecited place is opposed to that which wants authority, not unto public or common. The king's promise made to me in private is no private promise; but will warrant me, if I come to plead before his majesty, albeit others make question whether I have it or no. In this sense, that interpretation of scriptures which the Spirit affords us that are private men is not private, but authentic, though not for extent or publication of it unto others, yet for the perfection of our warrant in matters of salvation or concerning God. For where the Spirit is, there is perfect liberty, yea free access of pleading our cause, against whomsoever, before the tribunal seat of justice; especially being wronged in matters of the life to come. To this purpose saith our apostle, *but he that is spi-*

^s It is worth labour to see Canus 2. lib. locorum Theol. cap. 8. where he says, Ecclesiæ autoritas non est formalis ratio

fidei, et ultima resolutio fidei non fit in ecclesiæ testimonium. See chap. 26. parag. 3.

ritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man^t. In those things wherein he cannot be judged by any, he is no private man, but a prince and monarch, for the freedom of his conscience. But if any man falsely pretend this freedom to nurse contentions, or to withdraw his neck from that yoke whereto he is subject, he must answer before his supreme Judge and his holy angels, for framing unto himself a counterfeit license without the assured warrant of his Spirit. And so shall they likewise that seek to command men's consciences in those matters wherein the Spirit hath set them free. This is the height of iniquity, that hath no temporal punishment in this life, but must be reserved as the object of fiercest wrath in that fearful day; the very idea of Antichristianism.

CHAP. XXIV.

530

That St. Paul submitted his Doctrine to Examination by the Words before written. That his Doctrine, Disposition, and Practice were quite contrary to the Romanists' in this Argument.

1. ST. PAUL, as well as other apostles, had the gift of miracles, which amongst barbarians or distressed souls, destitute of other comfort, likely to be won to grace by wonders, he did not neglect to practise, but sought not to enforce belief upon the Jews by fearful signs, or sudden destruction of the obstinate, albeit he had power to anathematize, not only in word, but in deed, even to deliver men alive unto Satan. When he came to Thessalonica, he went, as his manner was, into the synagogue, *and three sabbath days disputed* with his countrymen *by the scriptures, opening and al-*

^t 1 Cor. ii. 15.

leging, that Christ must have suffered, and risen again from the dead ; and this is Jesus Christ, whom I preach to you^u. These Jews had *Moses and the prophets, and if they would not hear them*, neither would they believe for any miracles ; which to have wrought amongst such, had been as the casting of pearls before swine. What was the reason they did not believe ? because the scriptures which he urged were obscure ? But St. Paul did open them. Rather they saw the truth, as papists do, but would not see it. They rightly believed whatsoever God had said was most true ; that he had said what Moses and the prophets wrote ; and yet St. Paul taught nothing which they had not foretold. But that was all one ; these Jews had rather believe Moses and the prophets meant as the Scribes and Pharisees or other chief rulers of their synagogue taught, than as Paul expounded them ; albeit his expositions would have cleared themselves to such as without prejudice would have examined them. But the Bereans were of a more ingenuous disposition, (so the word *εὐγενέστεροι*^x imports,) they were not vassals to other men's interpretations or conceits, but used their liberty to examine the truth. *They received the word with all readiness, and searched the scriptures, whether these things were so or no*. If they believed in part before, their practice confirms the truth of our assertion, that they were not to believe the infallibility of Paul, but of his doctrine, albeit they were well persuaded of his personal authority. If they believed neither in part nor wholly before they saw the truth of his doctrine confirmed by that scripture which they had formerly acknowledged, their ingenuity herein likewise confirms our doctrine, and condemns the papists of insolent blasphemy, for arrogating that au-

^u Acts xvii. 2.^x Acts xvii. 11.

thority unto the pope's decrees, which is only due unto God's word already established.

2. I would demand of any papists, whether the Bereans did well or ill in examining St. Paul's doctrine? If ill, why hath the Spirit of God commended them? if well, why is it not lawful and expedient for all true Christians to imitate them? Unless the reader bite his⁵³¹ lip, I will not promise for him he shall not laugh at Bellarmine's answer, albeit I knew him for another Heraclitus, or Crassus Agelastus, who never laughed in all his life save once, when he saw an ass feed on thistles. Surely he must have an ass's lips that can taste, and a swine's belly that can digest, this great clerk's divinity in this point. "I answer," saith he^x, "albeit Paul were an apostle, and could not preach false doctrine, thus much notwithstanding was not evident to the Bereans at the first, nor were they bound forthwith to believe, unless they had seen some miracles or other probable inducements to believe." Therefore when Paul proved Christ unto them out of the prophetic oracles, they did well to *search the scriptures whether those things were so*. If St. Paul had thought miracles a more effectual means than scriptures for begetting faith in such as acknowledged Moses and the prophets, no doubt he had used miracles rather than their authority. Or if the pope cannot expound the scriptures as effectually and perspicuously as St. Paul did, why doth he not at the least work miracles? Are we bound absolutely to be-

* Respondeo, etsi Paulus erat apostolus, et non poterat falsam doctrinam prædicare, tamen non constabat hoc initio Beroensibus, nec tenebantur mox credere, nisi prius viderent miracula, aut alias probabiles rationes credendi. Ita-

que cum Paulus probaret illis Christum ex oraculis prophetarum, merito illi scrutabantur scripturas, an hæc ita se haberent. Bellar. de Verb. Dei, lib. 3. cap. 10. resp. ad 7.

lieve him, and is he bound to do neither of these, without which the people of Berea were not bound (as Bellarmine acknowledgeth) to believe St. Paul? But if his reason be worth belief^y, “Christians, which know the church cannot err in explicating the doctrine of faith, are bound to embrace it without questioning, whether the places alleged be to the purpose or no.” Let such Christians as believe the pope cannot err, in the name of God believe whatsoever he shall teach without examination; yet remember withal, that thus to believe is to worship the dragon, by giving their names unto the beast. But unto what Christians is the pope’s infallibility better known than St. Paul’s was to the Bereans? Not unto us, whose fathers have forsaken him for his apostasy from God, and taught us to eschew him as Antichrist, to hold his doctrine as the very doctrine of devils. Unto us at least his holiness should seek to manifest his infallibility by such means as St. Paul did his, even unto such as had seen his miracles, and had experience of his power in expounding scriptures. Besides, St. Paul’s conversation in all places was continually such as did witness him to be a chosen vessel full of the Spirit of grace. He did not make merchandise of the word of God, as most popes do; *but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, so he spake through Christ^z*: he did not walk *in craftiness*, (yet who greater politicians than popes?) *nor did he handle the word of God deceitfully; but in declaration of the truth he did approve himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God^a*. This one, amongst others, he accounts as an especial motive

^y At Christiani quibus constat ecclesiam non posse errare in explicanda doctrina fidei, tenentur eam recipere, et non du-

bitare, an hæc ita se habeant. Idem ibid.

^z 2 Cor. ii. 17.

^a 2 Cor. iv. 2.

to persuade men of his heavenly calling, in that he did not preach himself, but *Christ Jesus, and himself their servant for Jesus' sake*. For so our Saviour had said, *He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory*^b. The pope (that we might know him to be Christ's opposite) seeks almost nothing else, nothing so much, as to be absolute lord over all other men's faith. If this any Jesuit will deny, let him define what prince amongst the nations, what tyrant in the world, did ever challenge greater sovereignty in affairs of this life, than the pope doth in all matters whatsoever concerning the life to come.

3. But it may be Bellarmine was either afraid or ashamed of this answer; wherefore he adds another as wise, to keep it from blushing: "I add," saith he^c, 532 "albeit a heretic sin in doubting of the church's authority, into which he hath been regenerate by baptism, (nor is the case the same in a heretic which hath once made profession of faith, and in a Jew or ethnic which never was Christian;) yet this doubt (which is a sin) being supposed, he doth not amiss in searching and examining, whether the places alleged by the Trent council out of scriptures or Fathers be true or pertinent; so he do this with an intent to find the truth, not to calumniate." A man at the first sight would deem Bellarmine, for his own part at least, had given

^b John vii. 18.

^c Addo etiam, quod etsi hæreticus peccat dubitando de auctoritate ecclesiæ in quam per baptismum regeneratus est, neque est eadem conditio hæretici, qui semel fidem professus est, et Judæi aut ethnici, qui nunquam fuit Christianus; tamen posito hoc dubio, et hoc peccato, non male facit scrutando, et examin-

ando an loca scripturæ et Patrum, a concilio Tridentino prolata, ita se habeant; modo id faciat intentione inveniendi veritatem, non calumniandi. Deberet quidem ille sine examine recipere doctrinam ecclesiæ, tamen melius est, ut examinando præparetur ad veritatem, quam negligendo remaneat in suis tenebris. Idem ibid.

us leave to examine the pope's doctrine by scripture; but that, as you heard before, he absolutely denies: nor will he (I am sure) pawn his hat, that he which searcheth the scriptures and Fathers alleged, and cannot find any such meaning in either as the Trent council would thence infer, shall be freed by their church from heresy; although he be not so uncivil as to calumniate the pope, but only (*salva reverentia*) ingenuously profess, that he thinks on his conscience the scripture meant no such matter as the council intended. This none of their church dare promise; for *dubius in fide* (by their doctrine) *est hæreticus*, he that doubts after such an authentic determination is condemned for an heretic: and yet without such assurance of being freed from heresy, this permission of reading scriptures is not worth God-a-mercy, seeing he must at length be constrained to believe the scripture saith just so as the pope saith, albeit his private conscience inform him to the contrary: so that by reading them, he must either wound his own conscience, more than if the use of them had been denied him; or else use them but as a court-favour or grace bestowed upon him by the pope, for which he must in good manners yield his full assent to his doctrine, with infinite thanks for his bounty. Howsoever, (if he be doubtful in their tenents,) he may not read the scriptures with Calvin, Beza, or any of our writers' expositions, or in any edition save such as they approve, or with the Rhemish animadversions or glosses, or according to the analogy of that faith wherein the Jesuits have catechized him. So that the reading of scriptures, if their opinions be erroneous, (as we hold the pope's decisions are,) serves to as good purpose for confirming one of their catechizing in the right faith, as the ringing of bells doth to bring a melancholy man out of some foolish conceit which runs in

his mind : both of them will believe their former imaginations (though never so bad) the better, because the one thinks the bells ring ; the other, that the scriptures speak just so as he imagines. This Bellarmine cannot dissemble in his next words : “ Bound he is to receive the church’s doctrine without examination ; but better he were prepared unto the truth by examining, than by neglecting it to persist still in his blindness.” His meaning in plain English is this : He and his fellows could wish reformed churches would all come off at once, and believe as Romanists do, without all examination whether they believe as Christians or magicians ; but if we will not be so forward as they could wish we were, they could in the second place be very well content to admit us into that church again, though after a year or two’s deliberation, rather than lose our company for ever.

4. The learned doctor Whittaker, of famous memory, out of the former place gathered these two corollaries : “ Every doctrine is to be tried by scripture : the apostle taught nothing but what might have been confirmed out of Moses and the prophets.” Sacroboscus’ reply to these orthodoxal collections confirms me in that conceit I entertained of Romish schoolmen, when I first began to read them. They seemed to me then, much more now, to handle matters of greatest moment in divinity after the same fashion (for all the world) nimble artists do philosophical theorems in the schools, whiles they are cursed by such as would triumph in their disgrace. Be the argument brought in itself never so good or forcible to evince the contradictory to their tenents ; yet if the opponent, in his inference of what was last denied, chance but to omit some petty term or clause impertinent to the main question, or make his propositions more improbable by framing

them more universal than he needs, occasion will quickly be taken to interrupt his progress, and put him off, especially (if the answerer be so well provided) with some show of instance to the contrary, or absurdity likely to follow, if all were true his antagonist would seem to prove. Nor do I censure this as a fault in youth, or whilst we are in Aristotle's forge, so the fire be out of us when we come into the sanctuary. But just in this manner doth the mimical Jesuit reply to the former truth: "I demand," saith he^d, "whether the doctor would approve this consequence; Paul preaching to the Athenians confirmed his doctrine with the testimony of the poet Aratus, and the Athenians had done well if they had sought whether Aratus had said so or no: therefore all doctrines must be judged by poets." But what if the Bereans' practice considered alone, or as Jesuits do scriptures, only mathematically, do not necessarily infer thus much? The learned doctor's charitable mind would not suffer him to suspect any public professor of divinity, as Sacroboscus was, could be so ignorant in scriptures, as not to consider (besides the different esteem of prophets and poets amongst the Jews) what St. Paul had, Acts xxvi. 22, expressly said; *I obtained help of God, and continue unto this day, witnessing both unto small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.* Unless he

^d Neque prætermittenda puto duo corollaria, quæ ex hoc malo argumento pejus colligit doctor iste. Unum est, Omnem doctrinam ex scripturis esse dijudicandam. Alterum, Apostolos nihil prædicasse, quod non ex scripturis prophetis confirmari posset. Quæro enim num illi probetur hæc consecutio? Paulus

prædicans Atheniensibus, suam doctrinam confirmavit testimonio Arati poetæ, recteque fecissent Athenienses, si Aratum scrutati fuissent, an ita se haberet: ergo omnis doctrina ex poetis dijudicanda est. Christoph. Sacroboscus Dublin. Def. Concil. Trid. p. 122.

could have proved Christ's resurrection, and other articles of Christian faith, out of Moses and the prophets, the Jews' exceptions against him had been just. For they were bound to resist all doctrines dissonant to their ancient ordinances, especially the abolishment of rites and ceremonies which Paul laboured most, knowing the lawgiver meant they should continue no longer than to the alteration of the priesthood; but in whose maintenance his adversaries should have spent their blood, whiles ignorant they were (without default) of the truth Paul taught, as not sufficiently proved from the same authority by which their laws were established. Nor was any apostle^e, either for his miracles, or other pledges of the Spirit that he could communicate unto others, to be so absolutely believed in all things during his lifetime, as Moses' and the prophets' writings. For seeing the gift of miracles was bestowed on hypocrites, or such as might fall from any gifts or graces of the Spirit they had; though the spectators might believe the particular conclusions to whose confirmation the miracles were fitted, yet was it not safe, without examination, absolutely to rely upon him in all things, that had spoken a Divine truth once or twice. In that he might be a hypocrite or a dissembler, for 534 ought others, without evidence of his upright conversation and perpetual consonance to his former doctrine, could know, he might abuse his purchased reputation to abet some dangerous error. Nor do our adversaries (though too too credulous in this kind) think themselves bound to believe revelations made to another, much less to think that he which is once partaker of the Spirit should for ever be infallible. Upon these supporters the forementioned doctor's reason (which the Jesuit abuseth to establish the church's authority)

^e See cap. xviii.

stands firm and sound ; “ I absolutely believe all to be true that God saith, because he saith it, nor do I seek any other reason ; but I dare not ascribe so much unto man, lest I make him equal to God^f ;” for God alone, and he in whom the Godhead dwelleth bodily, is immutably just and holy. Many others have continued holy and righteous, according to their measure, until the end ; but who could be certain of this besides themselves ? no, not they themselves always. And albeit a man that never was in the state of grace may oftentimes deliver that doctrine which is infallible ; yet were it (to say no worse) a grievous tempting of God to rely upon his doctrine as absolutely infallible, unless we know him (besides his skill or learning) to be always in such a state. Though both his life and death be most religious, his doctrine must approve itself to the present age, and God’s providence must commend it to posterity. Nor did our Saviour, though in life immutably holy, and for doctrine most infallible, assume so much unto himself before his ascension, as the Jesuits give to the pope. For he submitted his doctrine to Moses’ and the prophets’ writings. And seeing the Jesuits make less account of him than the Jews did of Moses ; it is no marvel if they be more violently miscarried with envious or contemptuous hatred of the divine truth itself, than the Jews were against our Saviour or his doctrine. These, even when they could not answer his reasons drawn from scriptures received, though most offensive to their distemperate humour, were ashamed to call Moses’ and the prophets’ authority in question, or to demand, How do you know God spake by them ? Must not the church’s infallibility

^f Credo id verum esse quod Deus dicit, quia ille dicit, nec aliam ullam quæro rationem ; non audeo vero homini tantum tri-

buere, ne ipsum Deo qualem faciam. Whitt. q. 5. c. 8. arg. 3. citante Sacrob. p. 122.

herein assure you? And if it teach you to discern God's word from man's, must it not likewise teach you to distinguish the divine sense of it from human^g? This is a strain of atheism which could never find harbour in any professing the knowledge of the true God, before the brood of Antichrist grew so flush, as to seek the recovery of that battle against God's saints on earth, which Lucifer their father and his followers lost against Michael and his holy angels in heaven.

CHAP. XXV.

535

A brief Taste of our Adversaries' blasphemous and atheistical Assertions in this Argument from some Instances of two of their greatest Doctors, Bellarmine and Valentian: that if Faith cannot be perfect without the solemn Testification of that Church, the Rarity of such Testifications will cause Infidelity.

1. FOR a further competent testimony of blasphemies in this kind wherewith we charge the church of Rome, let the reader judge by these two instances following, whether the Christian world have not sucked the deadliest poison that could evaporate from the infernal lake, through Bellarmine's and Valentian's pens. Valentian, as if he meant to out-flout the apostle for prohibiting all besides the great pastor Christ Jesus for being lords over men's faith, will have an infallible authority which may sit as judge and mistress of all controversies of faith^h, and this to be not the author-

^g So Canus argueth. See him cited, lib. 2. cap. 22. parag. 8.

^h Quod si igitur aliquam humanam auctoritatem divina assistentia infallibilem, magistram ac judicem in omnibus quæstionibus fidei, extare necesse est, ut superius, parag. 1. probavimus: neque vero ea est illorum hominum propria, qui olim divinam doctrinam aut verbo, aut scripto

tradiderunt, et vita defuncti sunt, ut jam etiam probatum est; restat, ut vivat hæc auctoritas, successione semper inter fideles præsens, quemadmodum in assertionem nostram posuimus. Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. dis. 1. q. 1. de object. fidei, punct. 7. parag. 12. vide annot. lib. 2. cap. 30. parag.

21.

ity of one or two men deceased, not peculiar to such as in times past have uttered the Divine truth either by mouth or pen, and commended it unto posterity; but an authority continuing in force and strength amongst the faithful throughout all ages, able perspicuously and openly to give sentence in all controversies of faith. Yet as these ambassadors of God deceased cannot be judges, shall they therefore have no say at all in deciding controversies of faith? You may not think a Jesuit would take Jesus' name in vain: he will never for shame exclude his Master for having at least a finger in the government of the church: why, what is his office? or what is the use of his authority, registered by his apostles and evangelists? Not so little as you would ween. For his speeches, amongst others that in their lifetime have infallibly taught Divine truths by mouth or pen, may be consulted as a witness or written law in cases of faith, but after a certain sort and manner, either to speak the truth, or somewhat thereto not impertinent, as shall be declared in due place. The place he means is, where he disputes whether the pope be bound to consult other authority besides his own, or use any means to search the truth before he pass sentence *ex cathedra*, that is, before he charge the whole Christian world to believe his decision. This he thinks expedient, but so far forth only, as if it please his holiness to enjoin the belief of some particular point upon the whole world, all must believe that he hath consulted scripture and antiquity as far as was requisite for that point, as you shall after hear.

2. That in such controversies he includes the means of knowing scriptures to be the word of God, is evident out of his own words in the forecited place. For the knowledge of scriptures he would have to be

an especial point of faith, yet such as cannot be proved by scripture, but by this living and speaking authority, as he expressly contends in the eleventh paragraph of the same question. His conclusion is: "If it be necessary there should be some authority, though human, yet by Divine assistance infallible, to sit as mistress and judge in all controversies of faith, and not to be appropriated to any deceased, as is already proved; it remains that it be always living in the church, always present 536 amongst the faithful by succession," he means of popes. Thus you see the present pope must be judge, and Christ and his apostles must be brought in as witnesses. And yet whether there were such a Christ, as St. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell us there was; or whether the Gospels which go under their names be apocryphal, and that of Bartholomew's only canonical, we cannot know but by the pope's testimony: so that in the end he is the only judge, and only witness, both of Christ, the apostles, and their writings; yea of all divine truths, at least assisted with his bishops and cardinals. Which Bellarmineⁱ, though otherwise a great deal more wary than Valentian, hath plainly uttered: "Unless," saith he, "it were for authority of the present

ⁱ Tertium testimonium est concilii Tridentini sess. 7. can. 1. ubi additur anathema negantibus septem esse vera et propria sacramenta: quod testimonium etiam si nullum haberemus aliud, deberet sufficere. Nam si tollamus auctoritatem præsentis ecclesiæ, et præsentis concilii, in dubium revocari poterunt omnium aliorum conciliorum decreta, et tota fides Christiana. Semper enim hæc fuit consuetudo apud Christianos, ut exortas controversias definirent episcopi, qui tunc vivebant. Et præterea om-

nium conciliorum veterum, et omnium dogmatum firmitas pendet ab auctoritate præsentis ecclesiæ. Non enim habemus testimonium infallibile, quod concilia illa fuerint, et legitima fuerint, et hoc aut illud definierint, nisi quia ecclesia, quæ nunc est, et errare non potest, ita sentit et docet: quod enim historici quidam meminerint eorum conciliorum, non potest parere fidem, nisi humanam, cui potest subesse falsum. Bellarm. de Eff. Sac. lib. 2. cap. 25.

church of Rome," (he means the Trent council,) "the whole Christian faith might be called in question ; so might all the acts and decrees of former councils:" his reason was, because we cannot know these antiquities but only by tradition and historical relation, which are not able to produce divine, firm, infallible faith.

3. Thus whilst this great clerk would dig a pit for the blind, (for he could not hope (I think) this block should stumble any that hath eyes in his head,) he is fallen into the midst of it himself: by seeking to undermine us, he hath smothered himself, and buried the cause he was to maintain. For if without the Trent council's testification we cannot by divine faith believe the scriptures or former councils to be of divine authority, how can such as were born within these thirty years believe that council itself, which ended above forty years ago? Few this day living were auditors of the cardinals' and bishops' decisions there assembled; not hearing them, their faith must needs be grounded upon hearsays. Again, if it be true the scriptures cannot be known to be Divine but by the authority of the present visible church; if this church do not *viva voce* confirm all Christians in this fundamental truth, their faith cannot be divine but human. What the pope or his cardinals think of these points, is more than any living knows, unless they hear them speak, and then it may be a great question whether they speak as they think. Pope Alexander the Sixth's decisions should have been negative, like the fool's bolt in the Psalm, *There is no God*, no Christ, no gospel; for so his meaning might have been interpreted, as they say dreams are, by contraries, seeing he never spake as he thought. Lastly, if the Trent council were so necessary for the confirmation of scriptures and other orthodoxal writings, how detestable was your clergy's

backwardness to afford the Christian world this spiritual comfort? For, whether fear it were the pope's authority should be curbed, or mere sloth and neglect of matters Divine that did detain them, their shifts to put the emperor off the reader may sufficiently conjecture from Sepulveda, at that time chronicler to the emperor, in his epistle to cardinal Contaren, one of the pope's legates in that council: "That my intermission of writing, and silence in that question concerning the correction of the year, hath been so long, I wish the fault had laid in my sloth or forgetfulness, that I might have been hence occasioned to acknowledge and deprecate the blame, rather than (as now I freely must) impute the true cause to the negligence of your Roman priests, whom I perceive to wax cold, and to think of nothing less than of calling the council: with hope whereof as heretofore I was excited, so now despair hath made me dull. For I see well that such as are most bound to have a vigilant care of the church's public welfare, and not to foreslow any opportunity of increasing her dignity, never so much as mention the council, (at this time as necessary as always useful,) but when Christians either are already, or are likely to be at variance. In one word, never but then, when there is sure hope it may be hindered by their discord. For when peace gets its turn, and all is quiet, not a word of the council. So as what they aim at by these unseasonable edicts is so manifest, as will not suffer the slowest capacity to live in doubt or suspicion^k."

^k Quod tam longum fuerit mearum literarum intervallum, et de quæstione corrigendi anni silentium, mallet equidem aliqua mea desidia vel oblivione commissum fuisset, et in eo cul-

pam agnoscere soliciteque deprecari, quam ex vestra, hoc est, sacerdotum Romanorum (ut libere loquar) negligentia, veram causam afferre, quos nimirum frigere et nihil minus quam de

4. This great learned antiquary's learned advice, in another epistle¹ sent to the same cardinal, then employed by the pope in the council, was, not to suffer matters decreed in any former council lawfully assembled together to be disputed or called in question. Sufferance hereof was in his judgment no less prejudicial to the state ecclesiastic, than unto the temporal it would be, to permit malefactors traverse the equity of public laws established and known, after sufficient proof or confession made of capital offences committed against them. The marginal quotations of the Trent council, compared with this grave admonition, which had antiquity-customs canonical, as the author urgeth, to give it countenance, may serve as a perfect index for our instruction, with what prejudice the bishops there

cogendo concilio cogitare video, cujus, ut spes me prius acuebat et incitabat, sic desperatio jampridem hebetat atque retardat: quos enim maxime in publicam ecclesiæ salutem excubare, atque ejus dignitatis augendæ nullam occasionem prætermittere oportebat, ab iis concilii rei salutaris, et si unquam alias, nunc maxime, necessariæ, mentionem fieri non alio tempore video, quam cum bellum aut geritur inter principes Christianos, aut impendit.—Sepulv. lib. 2. epist. 27.

¹ In his piis deliberationibus, illud pervetustum et justissimum decretum imprimis usurpari renovarique solet, ne qua hæresis, in aliquo rite coacto concilio priorum sententiis damnata, in dubium ac disputationem revocetur. Cujus sacrosancti decreti ea vis est, ut hoc uno cuncta dogmata Lutheranorum corruant. Quid enim novi excogitarunt ingeniosi artifices? quid vero afferunt quod

non hauserint ex veterum hæreticorum damnata sententia? Hæc cum ita sint religionis morumque summam in hujusmodi controversia paucorum doctorum hominum disputationi, et quasi certamini æquatis utrinque classibus, et quidem loco nostrorum iniquiore pontificis maximi voluntate permitti, nonne simile est, ac si quos capitalium, et manifestorum scelerum reos, quos liceat justissimis legibus gravissime, et cum summa auctoritate damnare, summus magistratus sic suam causam agentes audiat, ut crimina plane confessi, in leges receptas sacrosanctasque argute disputent, et cum justitia, et innocentia virtutes omnes in discrimen vocent? easdemque de veteresua paternaque possessione, judicibus quoque damnatis, pellerent nitantur. Jo. Genes. Sepulveda Cordubensis, lib. 2. epist. 28.

assembled came to determine by whose manuduction or set rules they drew their supposed inerrable lines of life. Now it is impossible any determination that takes its force from multitude of voices, should be either in itself more certain, or more forcible to persuade others, than are the motives or inducements that swayed the suffragants so to determine; and these in this case could, by Bellarmine's reason, be but historical persuasions or presumptions. For no Jesuit, I think, will say these bishops had the pope's sentence *ex cathedra*, to assure them beforehand what councils had been lawfully called and fully confirmed, or whether all the ancient canons they afterwards reestablished⁵³⁸ were already as authentic and certain as they could be made: for so it had been a labour altogether lost, yea a matter no less profane than rebaptization, to have confirmed them by suffrages of bishops after their cathedral confirmation by the pope. Even of his holiness himself, whose verdict (as in this case must finally be supposed) adds Divine credence unto testifications in their own nature fallible and merely human, the question proposed in the former section remains still insoluble. For without the relation of some historian, or register, or especial revelation from above, no pope can divine how many councils have been held, much less what was finally determined in every ancient canon confirmed by the bishops assembled at Trent. Special revelations, such as the prophets had, they acknowledge none. And yet distinctly to tell what hath been done in times past, or places afar off, without relying on others' relations, is an extraordinary effect of special revelation, a work of higher nature and greater difficulty than prophetic prediction of things to come. Are then the relations of historians, or registers of ancient councils, Divine and authentic? Not without

the pope's ratification. With it they are? Yes; or else a great part of Roman faith, by Bellarmine's reason, can be but human.

5. Hence may we safely annex a corollary, as necessary as suitable to the main conclusion proposed for the principal subject of this section: "As the pope's authority is, by Jesuitical doctrine, made much greater than our Saviour's, so may the assistance or countenance of his omnipotent spirit make the reports of any temporizing historian, or mercenary register, as divine, authentic, and certain, as any prophetic or apostolical testimonies of the Messiah." Yea, if it should please him to authorize Baronius' Annals, or relations of former councils, their credit should be no less than the evangelists'. Yea, hence it follows, (as the discreet reader, without further repetition of what hath here been said, or new suggestion of the reasons whereon the inference is grounded, will (I hope) of his own accord hereafter^m collect,) that determinations proceeding upon any knaves' or loose companions' testimonies, though more loosely examined, so examined at all, or taken for examined by the pope, shall, by his approbation, be of force as all-sufficient, either for producing Divine belief of men's spiritual worth we never heard of, or for warranting daily performance of religious worship to their memory, as any declaration he can make upon our Saviour's promises unto his apostles. For we may not more doubt of any religion he shall authorize, or any man's salvation canonized by him, (whosoever be the relators of their life and death,) than of St. Peter's, though our Saviour promised he should be saved. The reason is plain. The pope is sole judge of all Divine oracles; our Saviour (as you have heard out of Valentian) is but a witness, and so may others be, whomsoever he shall admit.

^m Chap. 31. parag. 5.

SECT. IV.

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Containing the third Branch of Romish Blasphemy, or the last Degree of great Antichrist's Exaltation, utterly overthrowing the whole Foundation of Christian Religion, preposterously inverting both Law and Gospel, to God's Dishonour and the Advancement of Satan's Kingdom.

THAT the authority challenged by the Romish church is altogether prejudicial to God's word, greater than either the visible church of Israel from Moses till Christ, or Christ himself or his apostles, either before or after his resurrection, did either practise or lay claim to, is evident from the former treatise. It remains we demonstrate, how the acknowledgment of this most absolute, most infallible authority, doth quite alienate our faith and allegiance from God and the Trinity, unto the pope and his triple crown. The proposition, then, we are to prove, is this: Whosoever steadfastly believes the absolute authority of the Romish church, as now it is taught, doth truly and properly believe no article of Christian faith, no God, no Trinity, no Christ, no redemption, no resurrection, no heavenly joys, no hell.

CHAP. XXVI.

The Jesuit's Unwillingness to acknowledge the Church's Proposal for the true Cause of his Faith: of Differences and Agreements about the final Resolution of Faith, either amongst the Adversaries themselves, or betwixt us and them.

1. THE conclusion proposed follows out of their principles before mentioned ⁿ, and afterwards to be re-

ⁿ In the beginning of the second section, chap. 2 and 3.

iterated, that they may be the more thoroughly sounded. But ere we come to rase the very foundation of their painted walls, a few weak forts must be overthrown, which some have erected, in hope thereby to save their church from battery. Valentian^o, (as you heard before,) seeing his mother would lie more open to our assault, if they should admit this manner of speech, "I believe this or that proposition or article of faith, because the holy church doth so instruct me;" would mitigate the harshness of it, thus: "If you ask me, why I believe a Trinity, or God to be one in three Persons, I would answer, Because God hath revealed this mystery." The Divine revelation then is the cause
 540 of your belief in this particular. But how do you know, how can you believe, that God hath revealed this? by another Divine revelation? No; for so we should run from revelation to revelation without end. If by revelation you do not believe it, by what means else? "By the infallible proposal of the church, as a condition, without which I could not believe it." Mark the mysticalness of this speech, *Ob propositionem ecclesie infallibilem*, "For the church's infallible proposal." Is not this as much as if he had said, Because the church, which is infallible, proposeth it to me? Why then doth he make it but a condition necessary or requisite to this assent? Belike he meant not so, but would have us to see the condition, not the true and principal cause of his belief. The church's authority, by his doctrine, may in divers respects be truly said both a cause and condition; or, to speak more distinctly, the church's proposal is a condition without which no man can ordinarily believe propositions of faith: the infallibility of her proposal is the true and

^o Valentian, tom. 3. in Aquin. punct. 1. Vide verba integra disp. 1. q. 1. de object. fidei, l. 2. c. 30. parag. 16 et 17.

only cause of every Roman catholic's belief in all points. This denial of the church's authority to be (according to their principles) the true cause of belief, is the sconce that must first be overthrown; but after a friendly parley of the difference betwixt us.

2. Valentian, if we well observe his process in the forecited place, proves only that which none in reformed churches did ever deny, albeit he proffer more in his premises; which whilst he seeks to perform, he hath only proved himself a ridiculous atheist, as partly is shewed in the former treatises, and shall more fully appear in the end of this. To ease his fellows hereafter of such unnecessary or impertinent pains as oft-times they take, I dare avouch, in the behalf of all my brethren in reformed churches, no Jesuit shall be more forward to demand than we to grant, That God in these latter days doth not teach men the gospel in such sort as he did St. Paul, without the help or ministry of man. We maintain, as well as they, God is not a Father to such as will not acknowledge the church for their mother. Notwithstanding, thus we conceive and speak of the church indefinitely taken, not confined to any determinate place, not appropriated to any individual, or singularized persons. Now to verify an indefinite speech or proposition, the truth of any one particular sufficeth: as he that should say, Socrates by man was taught his learning, doth not mean the specific nature, or whole mankind; but that Socrates, as others, had one man or other at the first to instruct him. The same dialect we use when we say, Every one that truly calls God Father, receives instructions from the church his mother; that is, from some in the church lawfully ordained for planting faith; unto whom such filial obedience as elsewhere^p we have

In what sense it is true, He that hath not the church for his mother hath not God for his Father.

^p Lib. 2. cap. 4 and 6, &c.

spoken of is due. The difference likewise between the Romanists and us hath partly been discussed before^q. In brief, it is thus: We hold this ministry of the church is a necessary condition, or mean precedent, for bringing us to the infallible truth, or true sense of God's word; yet no infallible rule whereon finally or absolutely we must rely, either for discerning Divine revelations, or their true meaning. But as those resemblances of colours, which we term *species visibiles*, are not seen themselves, though necessary for the sight of real colours; so this ministry of the church, albeit in itself not infallible, is yet necessarily required for

541 our right apprehension of the Divine truth, which in itself alone is most infallible; yea as infallible to us as it was to the apostles or prophets, after it be rightly apprehended. The difference is in the manner of apprehending or conceiving it. They conceived it immediately, without the ministry or instruction of man; so cannot we. This difference elsewhere I have thus resembled: As trees and plants, now growing up by the ordinary husbandry of man from seeds precedent, are of the same kind and quality with such as were immediately created by the hand of God; so is the immediate ground of ours, the prophets' and apostles' faith, the same. Albeit theirs was immediately planted by the finger of God, ours propagated from their seed, sown and cherished by the daily industry of faithful ministers.

3. Neither in the substance of this assertion nor manner of the explication do we much differ, if aught, from Canus^r in his second book, where he taxeth Scotus,

^q Lib. 2. sect. 1. and cap. 1. 4 and 19.

^r Eorum hic errorem dissimulare non possum, qui asserunt,

Fidem nostram eo tanquam in ultimam credendi causam reducendam esse, ut credamus ecclesiam esse veracem, cui prius (in-

The object of the apostles' faith and ours the same, though the manner of our apprehending it differ.

Durand, and others, for affirming the last resolution of our faith was to be made into the veracity or infallibility of the church. “The apostles and prophets,” saith he, “resolved their faith into truth and authority Divine; therefore we must not resolve our faith into the human authority of the church; for the faith is the same, and must have the same formal reason.” For better confirmation of which assertion, he adds this reason: “Things incident to the object of any habit by accident do not alter the formal reason of the object. Now that the articles of faith should be proposed by these, or these men, is merely accidental; wherefore, seeing the apostles and prophets did assent unto the articles of faith because God revealed them, the reason of our assent must be the same.” Lastly, he concludes, that the church’s authority, miracles, or the like, are only such precedent conditions, or means for begetting faith, as sensitive knowledge, exhortations, or advice of masters, are for bringing us to certain knowledge in demonstrative faculties. Had either this great divine spoken consequently to this doctrine in his fifth book, or would the Jesuits avouch no more than here he doth, we should be glad to give them the

quiunt) assentimur per fidem acquisitam, quam per infusam. Quod si verum esset, prima ratio formalis infusæ fidei non esset veritas increata, sed creata.—Præterea apostoli et prophetæ resolvebant ultimo fidem suam in divinam et auctoritatem et veritatem. Ergo nos in humanam ecclesiæ auctoritatem fidem nostram non resolvimus. Eadem enim fides est, idemque proinde habet objectum, rationemque formalem. Confirmat autem hoc, vel maxime, quod ea quæ per accidens contingunt, objecto ali-

cujus habitus, non variant illius objecti formalem rationem: sed articulos credendos proponi per hos, aut illos homines, per accidens omnino contingit. Cum ergo prophetæ et apostoli assentirentur articulis fidei, quia Deus revelavit, eandem quoque nos credendi rationem habebimus; nisi forte fides nostra non est virtus theologica, cujus videlicet prima et formalis ratio, si his credimus, non divina, sed humana veritas est.—Canus, lib. 2. loc. Theol. cap. 8.

right hand of fellowship in this point. But they go all a wrong way unto the truth, or would to God any way to the truth, or not directly to overthrow it. Catharinus, though in a manner ours, in that question about the certainty of salvation, saith more, perhaps, than they meant whom Canus late taxed, avouching (as Bellarmine^s cites his opinion) that “Divine faith
542 could not be certain and infallible, unless it were of an object approved by the church.” Whence would follow, what Bellarmine there infers, that the apostles and prophets should not have been certain of their revelations, immediately sent from God, until the church had approved them; which is a doctrine well deserving a sharper censure than Bellarmine bestows on Catharinus. Albeit, to speak the truth, Bellarmine was no fit man to censure, though the other most worthy to be severely censured. Catharinus might have replied, that the prophets and apostles, at least our Saviour, in whom Bellarmine instanceth, were the true church, as well as they make the pope. Nor can Valentian’s with other late Jesuits’ opinions, by any pretence or show,

^s At (inquit Catharinus) soli fidei catholicæ convenit, ut ei falsum subesse nequeat, quoniam est de objecto probato ab ecclesia. Fidei autem divinæ particulari falsum subesse potest, quoniam est de objecto non probato ab ecclesia. Respondeo, novam atque inauditam hanc esse doctrinam, ut fidei divinæ possit subesse falsum, antequam ejus objectum probatum fuerit ab ecclesia. Probatio enim ecclesiæ facit ut omnibus innotescat, objectum illud esse revelatum a Deo, et propter hoc certum et indubitatum; non autem tribuit firmitatem verbo Dei aliquid revelantis. Itaque implicat con-

tradictionem, ut aliquid sit revelatum a Deo, et possit ei subesse falsum, sive illud ab ecclesia probatum sit, sive non sit. Alioqui quod CHRISTUS paralytico et Magdalenæ dicebat, *Remittuntur tibi peccata tua*, poterat esse falsum, quia nondum fuerat ab ecclesia approbatum; quis ita desipiat ut verba CHRISTI ab ecclesiæ approbatione pendere arbitretur? Et si quis infantem baptizet, cum intentione vere baptizandi, nonne hæreticus censetur, si dubitet an infans ille sit vere justificatus? et tamen non est hoc objectum ab ecclesia approbatum. — Bell. lib. 3. de Justific. cap. 3.

hardly Bellarmine's own, be cleared from the same inconveniences he objects to Catharinus, as will appear upon better examination to be made hereafter^t.

CHAP. XXVII.

That the Church's Proposal is the true, immediate, and prime Cause of all absolute Belief any Romanist can have concerning any determinate Divine Revelation.

1. WHEREAS Valentian and (as he says) Cajetan deny the church's infallible proposal to be the cause why we believe Divine revelations, this speech of his is equivocal, and in the equivocation of it (I think) Valentian sought to hide the truth. The ambiguity or fallacy is the same which was disclosed^u in Bellarmine's reply unto us objecting, that pontificians make the church's authority greater than scriptures'. In this place, as in that, the word of God, or Divine revelations, may be taken either indefinitely, for whatsoever God shall be supposed to speak, or for those particular scriptures or revelations which we suppose he hath already revealed and spoken. Or Valentian may speak of the object of our belief, not of belief itself. If we take his meaning in the former sense, what he saith is most true. For the church's infallibility is no cause why we believe that to be true which we suppose God hath revealed; nor did we ever charge them with this assertion. This is an axiom of nature presupposed in all religions, yet of which none ever knew how to make so great secular use as the Romish church doth. But if we speak of that canon of scripture which we have, or any things contained in it, (all which we and our adversaries jointly suppose to have come from God,) the only cause why we do or can rightly believe them

^t See the next chapter.

^u Chap. 2.

is, by Jesuitical doctrine, the church's infallibility that commends them unto us.

2. If that church which Valentian holds so infallible should have said unto him, *totidem verbis*, You must believe the books of Maccabees are canonical, even for this reason, that your holy catholic mother tells you so; he durst not but have believed as well the reason as the matter proposed; to wit, That these books were canonical, because the church had enjoined him so to think; albeit his private conscience, left to God's grace
543 and itself, would rather have held the negative. For if we believe, as the papists generally instruct us, that we ourselves, all private spirits, may err in every persuasion of faith; but the church, which only is assisted by a public spirit, cannot possibly teach amiss in any; we must, upon terms as peremptory, and in equal degree, believe every particular point of faith because the church so teacheth us, not because we certainly apprehend the truth of it in itself. For we may err, but this public spirit cannot. And consequently we must infallibly believe these propositions—Christ is the Redeemer of the world, not Mahomet—There is a trinity of Persons in the Divine nature^x—for this reason only, that the church commends them unto us for Divine revelations; seeing by their arguments brought to disprove the sufficiency of scriptures, or certainty of private spirits, no other means possible is left us. Nay, were they true, we should be only certain that without the church's proposal we still must be most uncertain in these and all other points; because the sons are perpetually obnoxious to error, from which the mother is everlastingly privileged. The same propositions and conclusions we might conditionally believe to be absolutely authentic, upon supposal they were God's word;

^x Vid. cap. 29. parag. 2.

but that they are his word, or revelations truly Divine, we cannot firmly believe, but only by firm adherence to the church's infallible authority, as was in the second section^y deduced out of the adversaries' principles. Hence it follows, that every particular proposition of faith hath such a proper causal dependence upon the church's proposal, as the conclusion hath upon the premises, or any particular upon its universal. Thus much Sacroboscus^z grants.

3. Suppose God should speak unto us face to face, what reason had we absolutely and infallibly to believe him, but because we know his words to be infallible? his infallibility then should be the proper cause of our belief. For the same reason, seeing he doth not speak to us face to face, as he did to Moses, but, as our adversaries say, "reveals his will obscurely, so as the Revealer is not manifested unto us;"—but his meaning is by the visible church, (which is to us instead of prophets, apostles, and Christ himself, and all the several manners God used to speak unto the world, before he spake to it by his only Son^a;)—this Panthea's infallibility must be the true and proper cause of our belief: and Valentian^b himself thinks that Sarah and others of the old world, to whom God spake in private, either by

^y Chap. 3, &c.

^z The place is quoted in the second annotation, parag. 5.

^a Vid. Annot. cap. 29. parag. 5.

^b Ex quo intelligitur eos qui in scriptura reprehenduntur, quod privatis revelationibus non crediderint, ut Sara, Gen. 18. Zacharias, Lucæ 1. non propter infidelitatem proprie, ut est vitium contra fidem catholicam, reprehendi, sed propter imprudentiam et duritiem cordis. Pertinet enim ad prudentiam infusam, et ad

donum consilii, ejusmodi revelationibus privatis assensum præbere vel negare, consideratis circumstantiis, quæ docent eas esse a Deo vel non: et illæ personæ commemoratæ, ex prudentia et dono consilii credere illis debuissent.—Valent. disp. 1. quæst. 1. de objecto fidei, punct. 1. §. 5. The ground of this position is, because sola divina revelatio ab ecclesia proposita est objectum fidei.

the mouth of angels, his Son, or Holy Spirit, or by what means soever, did not sin against the doctrine of faith, or through unbelief, when they did not believe God's promises. "They did herein unadvisedly, not unbelievingly." Why not unbelievingly? "Because the visible church did not propose these promises unto them."

- 544 4. If not to believe the visible church's proposals be that which makes distrust or diffidence to God's promises infidelity, then to believe them is the true cause of believing God's promises: or, if Sarah and others did (as Valentian saith) unadvisedly or imprudently in not assenting to Divine truths proposed by angels, surely they had done only prudently and advisedly in assenting to them; their assent had not been truly and properly belief. So that by this assertion the church's proposal hath the very remonstrative note and character of the immediate and prime cause whereby we believe and know matters of faith. For whatsoever else can concur, without this, our assent to Divine truths proposed is not true catholic belief; but firmly believing this infallibility, we cannot err in any other point of faith.

5. This truth Valentian elsewhere^c could not dissemble, howsoever in his professed resolution of faith he sought to cover it by change of apparel; investing the church's proposal only with the title of a "condition requisite," and yet withal (so dissonant is falsity to itself) making it the reason of believing Divine revelations. If a reason it be why we should believe them, needs must it sway any reasonable mind to embrace their truth. And whatsoever inclines our minds to the embracement of any truth, is the proper efficient

^c Vide lib. 2. cap. 30. parag. 19. Ratio credendi est causa credendi.

cause of belief or assent unto the same. Yea, efficiency or causality itself doth formally consist in this inclination of the mind. Nor is it possible this proposal of the church should move our minds to embrace Divine revelations by any other means than by believing it; and belief itself being an inclination or motion of the mind, our minds must first be moved by the church's proposal, ere it can move them at all to assent unto other Divine truths. Again; Valentian^d grants that the orthodoxal or catechistical answer to this interrogation, "Why do you believe the doctrine of the Trinity to be a Divine revelation?" is, "Because the church proposeth it to me for such." He that admits this answer for sound and catholic, and yet denies the church's proposal to be the true and proper cause of his belief in the former point, hath smothered, doubtless, the light of nature, by admitting too much artificial subtilty into his brains. For if a man should ask, Why do you believe there is a fire in yonder house? and answer were made, Because I see the smoke go out of the chimney; should the party thus answering in good earnest peremptorily deny the sight of the smoke to be the cause of his belief there was a fire, he deserved very well to have either his tongue scorched with the one, or his eyes put out with the other. Albeit if we speak of the things themselves, not of his belief concerning them, the fire was the true cause of the smoke, not the smoke of the fire. But whatsoever it be—cause, condition, circumstance, or effect—that truly satisfieth this demand, Why do ye believe this or that? it is a true and proper cause of our belief, though not of the thing believed. If then

^d Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. words are quoted, lib. 2. cap. 30.
disput. 1. quæst. 1. de objecto parag. 16.
fidei, punct. 1. part. 10. His

we admit the church's proposal to be but a condition annexed to Divine revelations, yet if it be an infallible *medium* or mean, or, as our adversaries all agree, the only mean infallible, whereby we can rightly believe this or that to be a Divine revelation, it is the true and only infallible cause of our belief. That speech of
 545 Valentian, which to any ordinary man's capacity includes as much as we now say, was before alleged^e, "That scripture which is commended and expounded unto us by the church is, *eo ipso*, even for this reason, most authentic and clear." He could not more emphatically have expressed the church's proposal to be the true and prime cause why particular or determinate Divine revelations become so credible unto us. His second, Sacroboscus^f, hath many speeches (to be inserted hereafter) to the same effect. Amongst others, where doctor Whittaker objects, that the principal cause of faith is by papists ascribed unto the church, he denies it only thus far, "What we believe for the church's proposal, we jointly believe for God speaking either in his written word or by tradition:" yet if a man should have asked him why he did, or how possibly he could, infallibly believe that God did speak all the words either

^e Lib. 2. cap. 16. part. 8.

^f Voluerit igitur de fide supernaturali indistincte loqui, prout differt a fide naturali et acquisita: et vim generandi fidem habere, quicquid ad actum sive ex parte potentiæ, sive ex parte objecti est necessarium. Verum tunc, ut scripturæ vis hæc concedi potest; sic nequaquam debet excludi ecclesia; quæ respectu nostri est causa proponens, ut est supra explicatum. And a little after: *Authoritas ecclesiæ proponentis, et loquen-*

tis Dei in scriptura, respectu actus fidei, se habent ut lumen, et color, respectu visionis, albi; vel quemadmodum potentia, et dispositiones in materia se habent, respectu actus informationis formæ substantialis; et quod consequens est, quæ habetur fides a scriptura Dei mentem continente, eadem habetur ab ecclesia, et qui libri sint verbum Dei, et quis sit verus scripturæ sensus, indicante.—Sacroboscus *Def. Decr. Trid. et Sentent. Bellarm. cap. 6. part. 1. pag. 105.*

contained in the Bible, or in their traditions, he must have given either a woman's answer, Because God spake them; or this, Because our holy mother the church doth say so. For elsewhere^g he plainly avows the books of canonical scripture need not be believed without the church's proposal, whose infallible authority was sufficiently known before one tittle of the New Testament was written, and were to be acknowledged though it had never been: he plainly confesseth withal, that he could not believe the scriptures taught some principal articles of faith most firmly believed by him, unless the church's authority did thereto move him, against the light of natural reason. Now if for the church's proposal he believe that which otherwise to believe he had no reason at all, but rather strong inducements to the contrary, as steadfastly as any other truth; the church's infallibility must be the true and only cause, both why he believes the mystery proposed, and distrusts the natural dictates of his conscience to the contrary. In fine, he doth not believe there is a Trinity (for in that article is his instance) because God hath said it, but he believes that God hath said it because his infallible mother the church doth teach it. This is the misery of miseries, that these apostates should so bewitch the world, as to make it think they believe the church because God speaks by it, when it is evident they do not believe God but for the church's

^g Vide Annot. cap. 30. parag. 4. Urget (Whittakerus) qui sensum aliquem amplectitur propter nullam aliam causam, nisi quia sic ecclesia statuit, non propter prophetica[m] et apostolica[m] scripturam tribuit augustiorem auctoritatem ecclesiæ quam scripturæ; sed cum in fide hæc duo sint, quid et propter quid, pa-

pistis, propter quid, est sola auctoritas ecclesiæ. Verum respondetur, id esse falsum: quæ enim credimus propter ecclesiam proponentem, simul etiam credimus propter Deum loquentem, verbo suo scripto vel tradito; ut est alias explicatum.—Sacrobosc. pag. 125.

testimony; well content to pretend his authority, that her own may seem more sovereign. Thus make they their superstitious, groundless, magical faith, but as a wrench to wrest that principle of nature, "Whatsoever God saith is true," to countenance any villainy they can imagine; as will better appear hereafter. But first, the reader must be content to be informed, that by
546 some of their tenents^h the same Divine revelations

^h At inquires, quando papistæ dicunt se certo statuere, id quod ecclesia definit esse verum; propositiones ipsas statuunt esse veras, vel quia ecclesia id illis dicit, vel non quia ecclesia dicit, sed quia scriptura dicit. Si primum, nullum discrimen inter Deum et ecclesiam statuatur, nam hoc proprium solius Dei est, ut id verum esse credamus quod ille dicit, nullam aliam quærendo rationem. Sin secundum, summa autoritas definiendi, non ecclesiæ, sed scripturæ defertur. Verum ne in aere disputemus, ut sæpe solet adversarius, catholici omnes firma fide credunt ecclesiam in nulla fidei quæstione determinanda errare posse: ubi igitur ecclesia definit aliquid esse de fide, id illi hoc theologico discursu concludunt esse certum. Ecclesia non potest aliquid non verum pro fidei dogmate credendum proponere: at hoc ecclesia pro dogmate fidei proponit credendum: est hoc ergo certum. In qua ratiocinatione medius terminus est determinatio ecclesiæ, atque ita, quo sensu medius terminus dicitur causa cognoscendi conclusionem, dici potest definitio ecclesiæ causa, propter quam hæc conclusio, ut est terminus prædicti discursus, certo persuadeatur. Absit vero ut quicquid

per modum medii est causa certæ cognitionis, eo ipso æquetur Deo. Secus enim angulus externus foret Deo æqualis, nam per hunc cognosco omne triangulum habere tres angulos æquales duobus rectis. Atque hæc solutio perspicua est, solum advertat, qui minus exercitatos habet sensus, dictam conclusionem, ut pendet ex discursu facto, pertinere ad habitum theologiæ, (qui quidem certus est; quemadmodum est habitus fidei et scientiæ: est tamen ab utroque distinctus; ut verior tenet theologorum sententia,) nam alia ratione pertinere potest ad habitum fidei, quatenus assensu simplici sine discursu creditur, et tunc ecclesiæ definitio non se habet per modum medii termini, sed per modum sufficientis propositionis; et autoritas Dei loquentis verbo suo scripto vel tradito, in loco ex quo petitur definitio, est formalis ratio credendi: ita ut istæ duæ rationes subordinatæ sunt causæ conjunctæ actus fidei, qui exercetur circa propositionem definitam: sicque, quemadmodum ait Aristoteles, non Policletus, nec statuarius, sed Policletus statuarius est causa statuæ; dicere possumus, Non definitio ecclesiæ per se et solitarie, nec solus locus ex quo petita est definitio ec-

may be assented unto by the habit either of theology or of faith; both which are most certain, but herein different, that the former is discursive, and resembles science properly so called; the latter not so, but rather like unto that habit or faculty by which we perceive the truth of general maxims, or unto our bodily sight, which sees divers visibles all immediately, not one after or by another. Whilst some of them dispute against the certainty of private spirits, their arguments suppose Divine revelations must be believed by the habit of theology, which is as a sword to offend us. Whiles we assault them, and urge the unstability of their resolutions, they fly unto the non-discursive habit of faith infused, as their best buckler to ward such blows as the habit of theology cannot bear off.

6. Not here to dispute either how truly or pertinently they deny faith infused to be a discursive habit, the logical reader need not (I hope) my admonition to observe, that faith or belief, whether habitual or actual, unless discursive, cannot possibly be resolved into any preexistent maxim or principle. From which grant, this emolument will arise unto our cause; That the church's authority cannot be proved by any Divine revelation or portion of scripture; seeing it is an article of faith, and must be believed *eodem intuitu* with that scripture or part of God's word, whether written or unwritten, that teacheth it; as light and colours are perceived by one and the same intuition in the same instant. And by this assertion we could not so properly say, We believe the Divine revelation because we believe the church; (nor do we see colours because we see the light;) but we

clesiæ, est causa assensus fidei; ratio objecti.—Sacrobosc. Def.
sed definitio et locus; illa ut Decr. et Sent. Bellarm. cap. 6.
causa sine qua non, autoritas part. 1. pag. 113—115.
Dei loquentis in hoc, ut formalis

may truly say, that the objects of our faith (Divine revelations) are therefore actually credible, or worthy of belief, because the infallible church doth illustrate or propose them; as the light doth make colours, though invisible by night, visible by day. This similitude of the light and colours is not mine, but Sacroboscus's; whom in the point in hand I most mention, because doctor Whittaker's objections against their church's doctrine, as it hath been delivered by Bellarmine and other late controversers, hath enforced him clearly to unfold what Bellarmine, Stapleton, and Valentian left unexpressed, but is implicitly included in
 547 all their writings. But ere we come to examine the full inconveniences of their opinions, I must request the reader to observe, that as oft as they mention resolution of faith, they mean the discursive habit of theology. For all resolution of belief or knowledge essentially includes discourse. And Bellarmineⁱ directly makes, Sacroboscus^j expressly avoucheth, the church's authority the *medius terminus*, or true cause, whence determinate conclusions of faith are gathered. From which and other equivalent assertions, acknowledged by all the Romanists this day living, it will appear that Valentian was either very ignorant himself, or presumed he had to deal with very ignorant adversaries, when he denied that the last resolution of catholic faith was into the church's authority; which comes next in place to be examined.

ⁱ See the Annotations, cap. 3.
 par. 1.

^j His words are quoted in the
 Annotat. parag. 5. of this chapter.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Discovering either the gross Ignorance or notorious Craft of the Jesuit, in denying his Faith is finally resolved into the Church's Veracity or Infallibility: that possibly it cannot be resolved into any Branch of the first Truth.

1. "It were a foolish question, as Cajetan" (saith Valentian^k) "hath well observed, if one should ask another, why he believes the first truth revealing. For the assent of faith is finally resolved into the first truth." It may be Cajetan was better minded towards truth itself, first or secondary, than this Jesuit was, which used his authority to colour his former rotten position, That the church's proposal by their doctrine is not the cause of faith: but our former distinction between belief itself and its object, (often confounded,) or between God's word indefinitely and determinately taken, if well observed, will evince this last reason to be as foolish as the former assertion was false. "No man," saith he, "can give any reason, besides the infallibility of the Revealer, why he believes a Divine revelation." It is true no man can give, nor would any ask, why we believe that which we are fully persuaded is a Divine revelation. But yet a reason by their positions must be given, why we believe either this or that truth, any particular or determinate portion of scripture, to be a Divine revelation. Wherefore seeing Christian faith is always of definite and particular propositions or con-

^k Recte illud quidem a Cajetano dictum est, "Fatuum esse quæstionem, si quis alterum interroget, cur credat primæ veritati revelanti." Nam in primam veritatem ultimo fit resolutio assensus fidei, atque adeo propter illam ultimo fides assentitur. Itaque non est quærenda ulterius ratio, quare fides assentiat. Sed solum potest quæri ulterius, unde

habeat illa prima veritas, ut sit prima veritas? Et tunc respondendum est, id habere secundum nostrum intelligendi modum ex divinitate, cujus attributum et quasi passio est, et quæ neque falli neque fallere potest.—Valent. tom. 3. in Aquinat. disp. 1. quæst. 1. de object. fidei, punct. 1. parag. 5.

clusions, and, as Bellarmine saith, (and all the papists must say,) "these cannot be known but by the church;" as her infallible proposal is the true and proper cause why we believe them to be infallibly true, because the only cause whereby we can believe them to be Divine revelations; so must it be the essential principle into which our assent or belief of any particular or determinate proposition must finally be resolved. Every conclusion of faith (as is before observed out of Bel-
 518 larmine¹) must be gathered in this or like syllogism, "Whatsoever God, or the first truth, saith, is most true: but God said all those words which Moses, the prophets, and the evangelists wrote: therefore all these are most true." The major in this syllogism is an axiom of nature, acknowledged by Turks and infidels; nor can Christian faith be resolved into it, as into a principle proper to itself: the minor, say our adversaries^m, must be ascertained unto us by the church's authority, and so ascertained, becomes the first and main principle of faith, as Christian, whenceⁿ all other particular or determinate conclusions are thus gathered: "Whatsoever the church proposeth to us for a Divine revelation is most certainly such: but the church proposeth the books of Moses and the prophets, finally, the whole volumes of the Old and New Testament, with all their parts, as they are extant in the vulgar Roman edition, for Divine revelations: therefore we must infallibly believe they are such^o." So likewise must we believe that to be the true and proper meaning of every sentence in them contained, which the church, to whom it belongs to judge of their sense, shall tender unto us.

2. For better manifestation of the truth we now

¹ Cap. 3. parag. 1.

^m Bellarm. loco citato.

ⁿ Vide Sacrobosc. c. 6. par. 1. pag. 109.

^o Chap. 1.

teach, the young reader must here be advised of a Resolution twofold ; one, of the things or matters believed or known into their first parts or elements ; another, of our belief or persuasions concerning them into their first causes or motives. In the one, the most general or remotest cause, in the other, the most immediate or next cause, always terminates the resolution. The one imitates, the other inverts the order of composition ; so as what is first in the one is last in the other, because that which is first intended or resolved upon by him that casteth the plot, is last effected by the executioner or manual composer. In the former sense we say, mixed bodies are lastly resolved into their first elements ; houses into stones, timber, and other ingredients ; particular truths into general maxims ; conclusions into their immediate premises ; all absurdities into some breach of the rule of contradiction. Consonantly to this interpretation of final resolution, the first verity, or Divine infallibility, is that into which all faith is lastly resolved. For (as we said before) this is the first step in the progress of true belief, the lowest foundation whereon any religion, Christian, Jewish, Mahometan or ethnic, can be built. And it is an undoubted axiom, *Quod primum est in generatione, est ultimum in resolutione* ; “ When we resolve any thing into the parts whereof it is compounded, we end, in the undoing or unfolding it, where nature began in the composition or making of it.” But he that would attempt to compose it again, or frame the like aright, would terminate all his thoughts or purposes by the end or use which is farthest from actual accomplishment. Thus the architect frames stones and timber, and lays the first foundation according to the platform he carries in his head ; and that he casts proportionably to the most commodious

or pleasant habitation ; which, though last effected, determines all cogitations or resolutions precedent. Hence, if we take this *ultima resolutio*, as we always take these terms, when we resolve our own persuasions, that is, for a resolution of all doubts or demands concerning the subject whereof we treat ; a Roman catholic's faith must, according to his principles, finally
549 be resolved into the church's infallibility. For this is the immediate ground or first cause of any particular or determinate point of Christian faith ; and the immediate cause is always that into which our persuasions concerning the effect are finally resolved, seeing it only can fully satisfy all demands, doubts, or questions concerning it. As for example, if you ask why men, or other terrestrial creatures, breathe, when fishes do not ; to say they have lungs, and fishes none, doth not fully satisfy all demands or doubts concerning this subject. For it may justly further be demanded, what necessity there was the one should have lungs rather than the other. If here it be answered, That men and other perfect terrestrial creatures are so full of fervent blood, that without a cooler their own heat would quickly choke them ; and in this regard the God of nature, who did not make them *ἡμερόβια*, or give them life in vain to be presently extinct, did with it give them lungs, by whose respiration their natural temper should be continued : this answer doth fully satisfy all demands concerning the former effect. For no man of sense would further question why life should be preserved, whose preservation immediately depends upon respiration, or exercise of the lungs, and is therefore the immediate cause of both, and that whereunto all our persuasions concerning the former subject are lastly resolved. Or if it should be demanded, why only man, of all other creatures, hath power to laugh ; to say he

were indued with reason, doth not resolve us; for a philosophical wit would further question, Why should reasonable substances have this foolish faculty rather than others? A good philosopher^o would persuade us, the spirits which serve for instruments to the rational part are more nimble and subtle, and so more apt to produce this motion, than the spirits of any other creatures are. But this, I must profess, resolves not me; for how nimble or subtle soever they be, unless man had other corporeal organs for this motion, the spirits alone could not produce it: and all organical parts are framed for the operation or exercise of the faculty, as their proper end. Whence, he that would finally resolve the former problem, must assign the true final cause why reasonable substances, more than others, should stand in need of this motion. Now seeing unto reason only it is proper to forecast danger, and procure sorrow and contristation of heart by pre-conceit of what yet is not, but perhaps may be; it was requisite that our mortality through reason, obnoxious to this inconvenience, should be able to correct this contristation motion by the contrary, and have a faculty to conceive such pleasant objects as might dilate the heart and spirits; that as man hurts his body by conceited sorrow, whereto no other creature is subject, so he might heal it again by a kind of pleasance, whereof he alone is capable.

3. Answerable to this latter acceptation of *final resolution*, if you demand a Roman catholic, why he believes there is a Trinity, there shall be a resurrection, a life everlasting; his answer would be, Because God, or the first verity, hath said so: but this doth not fully satisfy; for we might further question him, as he doth us, Why do you believe that God did say so? Here it

That according to the Jesuit's own principles, the church's infallibility doth so terminate all doubts or demands in
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^o Antonius Laurentinus Politianus, de Risu.

matters of the Romanist's faith, as the immediate or prime cause doth all doubts or questions concerning any demonstrable effect.

sufficeth not to say, this truth is expressly taught in canonical scriptures; for the doubt whereby he hopes to stagger us most is this, Why do you believe, or how can you know those books which ye call scriptures were from God? The last and final answer (according to the Jesuitical catechisms), wherein (as you heard before out of Bellarmine^p) they think they have great advantage of us, would be this: The holy church our mother doth so instruct, giving us this express admonition withal, *His amplius, fili mi, ne requiras*^q. Here (upon God their Father and the infallible church their mother's blessing) their souls are bound to rest without further doubt or demand. Whence, unless they use some mental reservation, or seek to shroud themselves in the former equivocation hitherto unfolded, they must of necessity account themselves accursed, if they deny the last or final resolution of their belief to be into the church's infallibility or veracity. Again; what reasonable man would demand further resolution of any doubts incident to his faculty, be it real or verbal, speculative or practic, than into the prime and immediate rules? He should surely be lashed in a grammar school, that either for quantity of syllables, right accent, construction of words, or the like, would seek a further reason than a known general rule which admitteth no exception. So should he with disgrace be turned over the bar amongst the lawyers, that would demur or seek a devolution of an evident ruled

^p Cap. 3. par. 1.

^q Ecclesiastes xii. verse 11. Hoc loco Salomon docet (inquit Bellarminus) non esse ulterius inquirendum, sed acquiescendum penitus, quando sententia data est a summo pastore, adjuncto præsertim consilio sapientum.

Quod si hæc dicuntur de sacerdote veteris testamenti, quanto magis dici possunt de sacerdote testamenti novi, qui longe majores promissiones a Deo accepit? Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, lib. 3. cap. 4.

case, which by his own confession could never alter. Much more gross would his absurdity appear, that in the mathematics, or other demonstrative science, should attempt to resolve a problem or conclusion further than into an unquestionable theorem or definition. Finally, might we have a centumviral court of all professions under the sun, our adversaries would be condemned with joint consent, either of intolerable folly or impudency, if they should, with Valentian, deny the last resolution of their faith to be into the church's infallibility; seeing they make it such a catholic, inerrable, perpetual rule of Christian faith, as admits no exception, no devolution from it, no appeal. It is to them more than he said of logic, *Ars artium, et scientia scientiarum*; "a faculty of faculties, a rule of rules;" able rightly to resolve all doubts concerning the very canon of scripture, or God's word, written or unwritten, or the true sense or meaning of both; briefly, able most authentically to determine and define all controversies in religion, of what kind soever.

4. Nor will it boot them ought to say, that God's word in the church's mouth is the rule whereinto faith is finally resolved, seeing the church defines nothing but by God's word, either written or unwritten. For this is more than the party which believes it can know, nor hath he any other motive to believe it besides the church's definition or assertion. Suppose then we should conceive so well of a temporal judge, as to presume he did never speak but according to the true meaning either of statute or customary law; yet if we could not know either the one or the other, or their right interpretation, but only by his determinations, the law were little beholden to him (unless for a flout) that should say he were resolved jointly by the judge and it. For seeing the law is to him altogether un-551

certain, but by the judge's avouchment or interpretation, his last resolution of any act of justice must be only into the judge's skill and fidelity. This inference Sacroboscus would not deny^r; he himself hath made the like, to prove that not the scripture but the church must be the infallible rule of faith. "You will object," saith he, "when the church defines, it always defines according to the word of God, either written or unwritten. New revelations it receives none: the promised assistance of the Spirit helps it only to know what is already revealed: therefore, from the first to the last, that which determines controversies, and is the judge in all questions of faith, is the word of God." To this objection thus he answers: "Because we cannot be certain of the true sense of God's word, but by the voice of the church which hears our controversies and answers them, the church is judge, although it judge according to God's word, which upon examination, and by the Spirit's assistance, it always under-

^r At dices, quando ecclesia definit, ex verbo Dei scripto, vel tradito, semper definit: neque enim amplius accipit novas revelationes, et assistentia Spiritus sancti illi promissa, est tantum ad ea, quæ jam revelata sunt, cognoscenda: ergo a primo ad ultimum, quod terminat controversias, et quod iudex est questionum fidei, est verbum Dei. Respondeo: Quoniam nobis non constat certo, quis sit verus scripturæ sensus, nisi per vocem ecclesiæ, quæ nostras audit contentiones, et respondet, ecclesia iudex est, quamvis iudicet ex Dei verbo, quod illa scrutando et examinando, propter assistentiam Spiritus Sancti, semper recte intelligit. Si autem quilibet nostrum haberet infallibile donum in-

telligendi verbum Dei, alio iudice non indigeremus; nam hoc fidei veritates continet; sed quoniam ita non est, verbum Dei respectu nostri non habet rationem iudicis: non quasi certam et veram non contineat sententiam, sed quia de ejus sensu per nos ipsi nequimus infallibiliter esse certi, sicut certi sumus de mente ecclesiæ, quæ et audire et referre potest voces; unde liquet deesse aliquid scripturæ comparatione nostri, quo minus noster iudex esse queat, quod non deest ecclesiæ. Sacrob. Def. Decr. Trid. et Sentent. Bellarm. cap. 6. These words immediately follow upon those cited (out of the same author, part 1. page 115.) in the 27th chap. parag. 5.

stands aright. And if every one of us should have the infallible gift of understanding God's word, we should not need any other judge." The reader, I hope, will remember what was said before; that those flouting hypocrites would fain believe the pope saith nothing but what God saith, that God may be thought to say all he says; which is the most abominable blasphemy that ever hell broached, worse than worshipping of devils, as shall appear hereafter.

5. It may be some novice in arts, that hath late read some vulgar logicians upon the demonstrations, might here frame this doubt in favour of the Romish church's doctrine. As the final cause may be demonstrated by the efficient, and the efficient by the final; so may the church be infallibly proved by scriptures, and the scriptures again by the church's authority, both infallibly believed each for other's sake, as both the former demonstrations are true and certain, and yet mutually depending one upon the other.

6. This objection, had some late logicians understood what they said, would carry some show of truth to countenance Valentian's former circular resolution; but they lace their master's rule, uttered by him *pinguì Minerva*, too too straitly. For taking it as they do, we should admit of circular demonstrations^s, the conceit whereof can have no place but in a giddy brain. To demonstrate the final cause in any work of nature, were to assign a counsellor to the infinite wisdom of the God of nature; in whose intention the end is first, and is the cause of all operation or efficiency. Who could give, or who would demand, a natural cause why life should be preserved? for this is the will of him

^s A rule in logic by some might in some sort shroud the much misconstrued. Whose mis- Romanists' sottishness in this argument not impeached

that gave it. If question were made of the manner how the life of man and other creatures is preserved, whenas their heat might seem to choke them, a man might truly answer, By respiration; and respiration is
552 from the lungs. But it is one thing to ask, how or by what means, another, for what end, any effect is produced. The former is an inquiry of the efficient, within these precincts of means or motions always, prime and independent; the latter, of the final cause absolutely, indemonstrable, because it implies a contradiction to give a reason why that should be, for whose sake all other things of that rank have being. Nor is the end itself (to speak properly) ever produced, though oftentimes in common speech we take the effect immediately thereto destinated (because most sensible) for the end itself, as we do the star next to the pole, because visible, for the pole or point immovable. Thus we confound respiration, or actual preservation of life, with the final cause why men have lungs; whenas both are effects of the lungs, both means of accomplishing nature's, or rather the God of nature's, purpose, in whose will or pleasure the final cause of any natural effect always consists. And seeing nothing in nature can preoccupate his will, no cause can be precedent to the final. This consideration of natural effects, tending as certainly to their proposed end as the arrow flies to the mark, caused the irreligious philosopher^t to acknowledge the direction of an intelligent supernatural agent in their working, the accomplishment of whose will and pleasure (as I said) must be the final cause of their motions; as his will or pleasure which bestows the charges, not the architect, (unless he be the owner also,) is the final cause why the house is built. Finally, every end supposeth the last intention of an intelli-

^t Averroes.

gent agent, whereof to give a reason by the efficient, which only produceth works or means thereto proportioned, would be as impertinent, as if to one demanding why the bell rings out, it should be answered, Because a strong fellow pulls the rope.

7. Now that which in our adversaries' doctrine answers unto the cause indemonstrable, whereinto final resolution of nature's works or intentions of intelligent agents must be resolved, is the church's authority. Nor can that, if we speak properly, be resolved into any branch of the first truth; for this reason, (besides others alleged before,) that all resolutions, whether of our persuasions or intentions, or of their objects, (works of art or nature,) suppose a stability or certainty in the first links of the chain which we unfold; the latter always depending on the former, not the former on the latter. As in resolutions of the latter kind lately mentioned, (imitating the order of composition,) actual continuation of life depends on breathing, not breathing on it; breathing on the lungs, not the lungs mutually on breathing; so in resolutions of the other kind, (which inverts the order of composition,) the use or necessity of lungs depends upon the use or necessity of breathing; the necessity or use of breathing upon the necessity or use of life, or upon his will or pleasure that created one of these for another. Thus again, the sensitive faculty depends upon the vital, that upon mixtion, mixtion upon the elements, not any of these mutually upon the sensitive faculty; if we respect the order of supportance, or nature's progress in their production. Whence he that questions whether some kinds of plants have sense, or some stones or metals life, supposeth as unquestionable that the former have life, that the second are mixed bodies. But if we respect the intent or purpose of him that sets nature a

Jesuits' faith cannot be resolved into any definite branch of the first truth.

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working, all the former faculties depend on the sensitive, the sensitive not on any of them. For God would not have his creatures indued with sense that they might live, or live that they might have mixed bodies; but rather to have such bodies that they might live, to live that they might enjoy the benefit of sense, or the more noble faculties.

8. Can the Jesuit thus assign any determinate branch of the first truth as stable and unquestionable, before it be ratified by the church's authority? Evident it is, by his positions, that he cannot; and as evident, that belief of the church's authority cannot depend upon any determinate branch of the first truth, much less can it distinctly be thereinto resolved. But contrariwise, press him with what Divine precept soever, written or unwritten, though in all men's judgments (the church's authority set aside) most contradictory to their approved practices—for example, That the second commandment forbids worshipping images or adoration of the consecrated host—he straight inverts your reason thus, Rather the second commandment forbids neither, because the holy church, which I believe to be infallible, approveth both. Lastly, he is fully resolved to believe nothing for true which the church disproves, nothing for false or erroneous which it allows. Or if he would answer directly to this demand, To what end did God cause the scriptures to be written? he could not (consonant to his tenents) say, That we might infallibly rely upon them, but rather, upon the church's authority which it establisheth^u. For God's word, whether written or unwritten, is by their doctrine^x but as the testimony of some men deceased, indefinitely presumed for infallible, but whose

^u So in the first edition: should it not be, "establisheth them?"

^x Vide annot. in cap. 25.

material extent the church must first determine, and afterwards judge, without all appeal, of their true meaning. Thus are all parts of divine truths, supposed to be revealed, more essentially subordinate to the church's authority, than ordinary witnesses are to royal or supreme judgment. For they are supposed able to deliver what they know in terms intelligible to other men's capacities, without the prince or judge's ratification of their sayings, or expositions of their meanings; and judgment is not ordained for producing witnesses, but production of witnesses for establishing judgment. Thus, by our adversaries' doctrine, God's word must serve to establish the church's authority, not the church's authority to confirm the immediate sovereignty of it over our souls.

9. Much more probably might the Jew or Turk resolve his faith unto the first truth, than the modern jesuited papist can. For though their deductions from it be muchwhat alike, all equally sottish; yet these admit a stability or certainty of what the first truth hath said, no way dependent upon their authority that first proposed or commended it unto them. The Turks would storm to hear any mufti profess, he were as well to be believed as was Mahomet in his lifetime; that without his proposal they could not know either the Old Testament or the Alcoran to be from God. So would the Jews, if one of their rabbins should make the like comparison betwixt himself and Moses, as the Jesuit doth betwixt Christ and the pope; who, besides that he must be as well believed as his Master, leaves⁵⁵⁴ the authority of both Testaments uncertain to us, unless confirmed by his infallibility. But to speak properly, the pretended derivation of all three heresies from the first truth hath a lively resemblance of false pedigrees, none at all of true doctrine and resolutions.

Of all the three the Romish is most ridiculous, as may appear by their several representations. As, imagine there should be three competitors for the Roman empire; all pleading it were to descend by inheritance, not by election; all pretending lineal succession from Charles the Great. The first, like to the Jew, allegeth an authentic pedigree, making him the eldest. The second, resembling the Turk, replies, that the other indeed was of the eldest line, but long since disinherited, often conquered and enforced to resign; whence the inheritance descended to him as the next in succession. The third, like the Romanist, pleads it was bequeathed to him by the emperor's last will and testament, from whose death his ancestors have been entitled to it, and produceth a pedigree to this purpose, without any other confirmation than his own authority; adding withal, that unless his competitors and others will believe his records and declarations (written or unwritten) to be most authentic, they cannot be certain whether ever there had been such an emperor as they plead succession from, or at least how far his dominions extended, or where they lay. This manner of plea in secular controversies would be a mean to defeat him that made it. For albeit the Christian world did acknowledge there had been such an emperor, and that many parts of Europe of right belonged unto his lawful heir; yet if it were otherwise unknown what parts these were, or who this heir should be, no judge would be so mad as finally to determine of either upon such motives. Or if the plaintiff could, by such courses as (the world knows) oft prevail in judgment, or other gracious respects, effect his purpose, he were worse than mad that could think the final resolution of his right were into the emperor's last will and testament, which, by his own confession, no man knows besides

himself; and not rather into his own presumed fidelity, or the judge's apparent partiality. So in this controversy, whatsoever the pope may pretend from Christ, all in the end comes to his own authority; which we may safely believe herein to be most infallible, that it will never prove partial against itself, or define aught to his holiness' disadvantage.

10. Here again it shall not be amiss to admonish younger students of another gull which the Jesuit^y would put upon us, to make their church's doctrine seem less abominable in this point. Lest you should think they did equalise the authority of the church with Divine revelations, Valentian would persuade you, it were no part of the formal object of faith. It is true indeed, that the church's authority by their doctrine is not comprehended in the object of belief, whilst it only proposeth other articles to be believed. No more is the sun comprehended under the objects of our actual sight, whilst we behold colours, or other visibles, by the virtue of it. But yet, as it could not⁵⁵⁵ make colours or other things become more visible unto us, unless itself were the first and principal visible; [that is, unless it might be seen more clearly than those things which we see by it, so we would direct our sight unto it;] so would it be impossible the church's infallible proposal could make a Roman catholic's belief of scriptures, or their orthodoxal sense the stronger; unless it were the first and principal

y Secundum legem Dei ordinariam, ut quis per habitum fidei Christianæ alicui veritati revelatæ assentiatur, præter ipsam revelationem, necesse est hujusmodi veritatem ab ecclesia proponi, tanquam a Deo revelatam, et fide credendam: non quia hæc

ecclesiæ propositio sit de ratione formali objecti fidei, sed quia est conditio quædam requisita: sine qua ordinarie assensus fidei Christianæ non elicitur.—Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. Disput. 1. quæst. 1. de Objecto Fidei, punct. 1. par. 6.

credible, or primary object of his belief; or that which must be most clearly, most certainly, and most steadfastly believed; so as all other articles besides must be believed by the belief or credibility of it. This is most evident out of Sacroboscus' and Bellarmine's resolution or explication of that point, how the church's proposal confirms a Roman catholic's belief. To give this doctrine of their church's infallibility the right title, according to the truth; it is not an article of catholic, but a catholic axiom of Antichristian unbelief; which, from the necessary consequences of their assertions, more strictly to be examined, will easily appear.

CHAP. XXIX.

What Manner of causal Dependence Romish Belief hath on the Church: that the Romanist truly and properly believes the Church only, not God or his Word.

1. THE two main assertions of our adversaries, whence our intended conclusion must be proved, are these, often mentioned heretofore. First, that "we cannot be infallibly persuaded of the truth of scriptures, but by the church's proposal."

Secondly, that "without the same we cannot be infallibly persuaded of the true sense or meaning of these scriptures, which that church and we both believe to be God's word."

How we should know the scriptures to be God's word, is a problem in divinity, which in their judgment cannot be assailed without admission of traditions or divine unwritten verities, of whose extent and meaning the church must be infallible judge. "It is necessary to salvation," saith Bellarmine^z, "that we know there be

^z Quarto, necesse est nosse, scripturis haberi potest. Nam extare libros aliquos vere divinos, quod certe nullo modo ex etiamsi scriptura dicat, libros prophetarum, et apostolorum esse

some books divine, which questionless cannot by any means be known by scriptures. For albeit the scriptures say, that the books of the prophets or apostles are divine; yet this I shall not certainly believe, unless I first believe that scripture, which saith thus, is divine. For so we may read every where in Mahomet's Alcoran, that the Alcoran itself was sent from heaven; but we believe it not. Therefore this necessary point [that some scripture is divine] cannot sufficiently be gathered out of scriptures alone. Consequently, seeing faith must rely upon God's word, unless we have God's word unwritten, we can have no faith." His meaning is, we cannot know the scriptures to be divine, but by tradi- 556 tions; and what traditions are divine, what not, we cannot know but by the present visible church: as was expressly taught by the same author before. And the final resolution of our believing what God hath said or not said must be the church's authority. To this collection Sacroboscus thus far accords^a: Some catholics rejected divers canonical books without any danger, and if they had wanted the church's proposal for others

divinos, tamen non certo id credam, nisi prius credidero scripturam, quæ hoc dicit, esse divinam. Nam etiam in Alcorano Mahumeti passim legimus, ipsum Alcoranum de cælo a Deo missum, et tamen ei non credimus. Itaque hoc dogma tam necessarium, quod scilicet aliqua sit scriptura divina, non potest sufficienter haberi ex sola scriptura. Proinde cum fides nitatur verbo Dei, nisi habeamus verbum Dei non scriptum, nulla nobis erit fides.—Bellarm. lib. 4. de Verbo Dei, cap. 4.

^a Dices catholicos quosdam rejecisse nonnullas scripturæ veras partes, quas caruisse Spiritu

Sancto nos inde non affirmamus: respondeo, quod si illi caruissent propositione ecclesiæ pro aliis libris sicut pro illis, potuissent quoque de tota scriptura sine peccato dubitare, juxta illud Augustini: "Ego evangelio non crederem, nisi me ecclesiæ commoveret autoritas." Et pari modo, vos qui ecclesiæ auctoritatem in præscribendo, et definiendo, quæ sunt fidei, facitis insufficientem; qua ratione aliquas scripturæ partes sine scelere (ut dicitis) repudiatis; eadem possetis et reliquas.—Sacrobosc. Def. Deer. Trid. et Sent. Bellarm. cap. 6. part. 1. pag. 85. Vide eundem pag. 109.

as well as them, they might without sin have doubted of the whole canon. This he thinks consonant to that of St. Austin; "I would not believe the gospel, unless the church's authority did thereto move me." He adds, that we of reformed churches making the visible church's authority in defining points of faith insufficient, might disclaim all without any greater sin or danger to our souls than we incur by disobeying some parts of scripture, to wit, the apocryphal books, canonized by the Romish church. The reader (I hope) observes by these passages, how Bellarmine ascribes that to tradition which is peculiar to God's providence; Sacroboscus, that to blind belief which belongs unto the Holy Spirit, working faith unto the former points, by the ordinary observation of God's providence, and experiments answerable to the rules of scriptures.

2. Consequently to the Trent council's decree^b concerning the second assertion, Bellarmine thus collects^c: "It is necessary not only to be able to read scriptures, but to understand them: but the scripture is often so ambiguous and intricate, that it cannot be understood with-

^b See cap. 1. of this book.

^c Septimo necesse est, non solum scripturam posse legere, sed etiam intelligere. At sæpissime scriptura ambigua et perplexa est, ut nisi ab aliquo, qui errare non possit, explicetur, non possit intelligi, igitur sola non sufficit. Exempla sunt plurima: nam æqualitas divinarum personarum, processio Spiritus Sancti a Patre et Filio, ut ab uno principio, peccatum originis, descensus Christi ad inferos, et multa similia deducuntur quidem ex sacris literis, sed non adeo facile, ut si solis pugnandum sit scripturæ testimoniis, nunquam lites cum protervis finiri possint. Notandum

est enim, duo esse in scriptura, voces scriptas, et sensum in eis conclusum; voces sunt quasi vagina, sensus est ipse gladius Spiritus. Ex his duobus primum habetur ab omnibus, quicunque enim novit literas, potest legere scripturas at secundum non habent omnes, nec possimus in plurimis locis certi esse de secundo, nisi accedat traditio. Et hoc forte dicere voluit Basilius de Spiritu Sancto, cap. 27. cum ait, sine traditionibus non scriptis evangelium esse purum nomen, id est, esse tantum voces et verba sine sensu. —Bellar. lib. 4. de Verbo Dei, cap. 4.

out the exposition of some that cannot err : therefore it alone is not sufficient. Examples there be many : for the equality of the Divine Persons ; the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, as from one joint original ; original sin ; Christ's descension into hell, and many like, may indeed be deduced out of scriptures, but not so plainly as to end controversies with contentious spirits, if we should produce only testimonies of scriptures. And we are to note there be two things in scripture, the characters or the written words, and the sense included in them. The character is as the sheath, but the sense is the very sword of the Spirit. Of the first of these two all are partakers ; for whosoever knows the character may read the scripture ; but of the sense all men are not capable, nor can we in many places be certain of it, unless tradition be assistant." It is an offer worth the taking that here he makes, that " the sense of the scriptures is the sword of the Spirit." This is as much as we contend, that the sense of the scripture is the scripture. Whence the inference is immediately necessary, That if the Romish church bind us to believe, or absolutely practise, aught contrary to the true sense and meaning of scriptures, with the like devotion we do God's ex-557 press, undoubted commandments ; she prefers her own authority above God's word, and makes us acknowledge that allegiance unto her which we owe unto the Spirit. For suppose we had as yet no full assurance of the Spirit for the contradictory sense to that given by the church ; we were in Christian duty to expect God's providence, and invoke the Spirit's assistance for manifestation of the truth ; from all possibility whereof we desperately exclude ourselves, if we believe one man's testimony of the Spirit as absolutely and irrevocably as we would do the manifest immediate testi-

mony of the Spirit : yet Sacroboscus^d “acknowledgeth he believes the mystery of the Trinity, as it is taught by their church, only for the church’s authority ;” and yet this he believes as absolutely as he doth, yea as he could believe any other divine revelation, though extraordinarily made unto himself.

3. In both parts of belief above mentioned, the causal dependence of our faith upon the church’s proposals may be imagined three ways ; either whilst it is in planting, or after it is planted, or from the first beginning of it to its full growth ; or from its first entrance into our hearts, until our departure out of this world. How far and in what sort the ministry of men in the church is available for planting faith, hath been declared heretofore. Either for the planting or supporting it, the skill or authority of the teacher reaches no further than to quicken or strengthen our internal taste or apprehension of the divine truth revealed in scriptures, or to raise or tune our spirits, as music did Elisha’s, the better to perceive the efficacy of God’s Spirit, imprinting the stamp of those divine

^d Quod caput religionis majus aut celebrius est, quam mysterium sanctissimæ Trinitatis ; quod trium Personarum astruitur divinitas ? hoc tamen tam parum clare insinuatur in scriptura, ut contrarium e sacris literis ita probabiliter, atque ut videbatur vere docuerint Ariani ; ut totos 300 annos vexarint ecclesiam, orbisque aliquando universus se fuerit (Hieronymo teste) miratus Arianum. Immo hodie docetur in Transilvania, et tum scriptis libris, tum publicis disputationibus, defenditur, multo acrius et melius, quam in hoc regno Parliamentarianismus. Atque ut li-

bere fatear quod res est, nisi me ecclesiæ autoritas commoveret, quam certissime credo in vero scripturæ sensu assignando errare non posse, non facile ex scriptura colligerem eum sensum ; qui habet Deum esse naturam unum, et Personis trinum, ita ut naturæ unitas numerosa sit, et Personarum distinctio realis : præsertim vero cum pugnare plane cum naturæ lumine videatur, ut Personæ sint inter se realiter distinctæ, et simul realiter identificatæ, divinæ essentiæ, uni et simplicissimæ.—Sacroboscus, Def. Decr. Trid. cap. 6. par. 1. pag. 67.

revelations in our hearts, whose characters are in our brains. The present church's proposals, in respect of our belief, is but as the Samaritan woman's report was unto the men of Sichar: *Many* (saith the evangelist^e) *believed in him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He hath told me all things that ever I did.* But this belief was as none, in respect of that which they conceive immediately from his own words: *For they said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ.* The ear (saith Job^f) *trieth the words, as the mouth tasteth meats.* Consonant hereto is our church's doctrine, that as our bodily mouths taste and try meats immediately, without interposition of any other man's sense or judgment of them; so must the ears of our souls try and discern divine truths, without relying on other men's proposals, or reports of their relish. No external means whatsoever can in either case have any use, but only either for working a right disposition in the organ whereby trial is made, or occasioning the exercise of the faculty rightly disposed. How essentially faith, by 558 our adversaries' doctrine, depends upon the church's authority, is evident out of the former discourses; that this dependence is perpetual, is as manifest, in that they make it the judge and rule of faith, such an indefectible rule, and so authentic a judge, as in all points must be followed, and may not be so far examined, either by God's written law, or rules of nature, whether it contradict not itself or them.

4. It remains we examine the particular manner of this dependence, or what the church's infallibility doth or can perform, either to him that believes, or to the object of his belief; whence a Roman catholic's faith

The principal difficulties in the Romanists' opinion, whereto no sufficient answer can be given.

^e John iv. 39.

^f Job xxxiv. 3.

should become more firm or certain than another man's. It must enlighten either his soul, that it may see, or Divine revelations, that they may be seen more clearly; otherwise he can exceed others only in blind belief. The cunningest sophister in that school, strictly examined upon these points, will bewray that monstrous blasphemy which some shallow brains have hitherto hoped to cover. We have the same scriptures they have, and peruse them in all the languages they do. What is it then can hinder either them from manifesting, or us from discerning their truth or true meaning manifested? Do we want the church's proposal? We demand how their present church itself can better discern them than ours may? what testimony of antiquity have they, which we have not? But it may be we want spectacles to read them; our church hath but the eyes of private men, which cannot see without a public light; their church's eyes are cat-like, able so to illustrate the objects of Christian faith, as to make them clear and perspicuous to itself, though dark and invisible unto us. Suppose they could; yet cats' eyes benefit not by-standers a whit for seeing colours in darkness, albeit able themselves to see them without any other light than their own. The visible church (saith the Jesuit) is able to discern all divine truth by her infallible public spirit. How knows he this certainly, without an infallible public spirit? Perhaps as men see cats' eyes shine in the dark, when their own do not. Let him believe so. But what doth this belief advantage him, or other private spirits, for the clear, distinct, or perfect sight of what the church proposeth? Doth the proposal make divine truths more perspicuous in themselves? Why then are they not alike perspicuous to all that hear, read, or know the church's testimony of them? Sacroboscus hath said all that possibly can

be said on their behalf in this difficulty §; “The sectaries, albeit they should use the authority of the true church, yet cannot have any true belief of the truth revealed.” If the use of it be as free to them as to catholics, what debars them from this benefit? “They do not acknowledge the sufficiency of the church’s proposal. And as a necessary proof or medium is not sufficient to the attaining of science, unless a man use and acknowledge it formally as necessary; so for establishing true faith, it sufficeth not that the church 559 sufficiently proposeth the points to be believed, or avoweth them by that infallible authority, wherewith Christ hath enabled her to declare both what books contain doctrines Divine, and what is the true sense of places controverted in them; but it is further necessary that we formally use this proposal as sufficient, and embrace it as infallible.”

5. The reason, then, why a Roman catholic rightly believes the truth or true meaning of scriptures, when a protestant, that knows the church’s testimony as well as he, rests in both points uncertain, is, because the

§ Adverte sectarios, ut supra insinuavi, nullius ecclesiæ autoritate, tanquam sufficiente proponente uti, ne quidem suæ; sed tanquam proponente nude: nam sibi assumunt ecclesiæ sententiam corrigere quando libet, et tunc opponunt Christum ecclesiæ, quasi ecclesia aliud proponeret, Christus vero aliud doceret; si autem ullam ecclesiam pro sufficiente haberent, oporteret in omnibus suam sententiam cum illa conformare. Unde si quando veræ ecclesiæ autoritate utuntur: ne tunc quidem de veritate revelata fidem habent, sicut non habet ille scientiam, qui me-

dio quidem utitur necessario, existimat tamen illud solum esse probabile. Nam ad fidem non solum opus est ut ecclesia sufficienter credenda proponat, infallibili illa sua autoritate, quam a Christo habet nos docendi, et qui libri doctrinam divinam contineant, et quis verus sit eorum locorum qui in controversiam vocantur sensus: sed etiam necesse est ut utatur homo ecclesiæ propositione formaliter, ut sufficiens est, scilicet, in illam tendendo ut in infallibilem.—Sacrobosc. Def. Decret. Trid. et Sent. Bell. cap. 6. part. 1. pag. 95.

catholic infallibly believes the church's authority to be infallible, whereof the protestant, otherwise persuaded, reaps no benefit by it, but continues still in darkness, labouring in vain to see the truth of Divine revelations without it, as much in vain as if a man should strive to see colours without light. For this is Sacroboscus' instance: "Besides the habit of faith seated in the understanding, and the supernatural concurrence of the Holy Spirit, due to all indued with the habit of faith, but necessary in respect of the subject or party, two things more are requisite on the behalf of the object, of which if either be wanting, the faculty can never perform its proper function. Of these two, the one is, that the proposition to be believed be revealed by God; the other, that there be a sufficient proposal made to us that God hath revealed it. For an insufficient proposal of any object is as none, as may appear by the example of light, which proposeth colours to be seen. For when the light is weak or scant, we cannot discern colours, not that we want a visible object, but because we want light sufficient to illuminate the object, or the space betwixt us and it^h." He adds withalⁱ,

^h Ad discernendam doctrinam orthodoxam præter habitum fidei in intellectu, et supernaturalem Spiritus Sancti concursum, habenti habitum fidei debitum, quæ se tenent ex parte subjecti: requiruntur præterea alia duo ex parte objecti, quorum si desit alterutrum, facultas nunquam obibit proprium actum. Horum unum est, ut propositio credenda, sit revelata a Deo; alterum, ut nobis sufficienter proponatur, Deum illam revelasse: necessitas prioris hinc ostenditur, quoniam illa qualitas sive habitus, quæ dicitur fides divina, et su-

pernaturalis, et inter virtutes theologicas est origine prima: suapte natura ad hoc est determinata, et limitata, ut inclinet tantum ad ea, quæ sunt a Deo dicta, et quidem obscure. Secus enim (si evidens nobis foret, mysteria fidei a Deo esse revelata, cum lumine naturæ notum sit illum non posse mentiri, aut falsum dicere) de iis habere-mus scientiam. Posterioris vero causa est, quod cum non videamus fidei mysteria esse a Deo testificata, necesse est nobis proponantur tanquam a Deo revelata, idque sufficienter. Quo-

“Such as disclaim the church’s authority, and are content with this, That truths of faith are revealed by God in his word, and hence promise themselves the supernatural concurrence of the Holy Ghost for producing acts of faith, are destitute of a sufficient proposer, and their presumption such, as if a man should persuade himself, because he hath colours before his eyes, and God ready to afford his ordinary concurrence as oft as he is disposed to exercise his visive faculty, he should be able to see them without light. For” (saith this Jesuit) “the prophets are dead, apostles dead, Christ gone to heaven, and instead of all” (prophets, apostles, or himself) “hath left us his church. Nor is it to be expected that God will everywhere, upon all occasions, supply the want of the external proposals by the abundance of internal illuminations, as he did to our first

niam insufficiens propositio ob-
jecti, perinde est ac nulla pro-
positio, ut patet exemplo lumi-
nis, quod oculo proponit videndos
colores. Quando enim lumen
est in gradu valde remisso, co-
lores discernere nequimus, non
quod desit objectum, sed quo-
niam deest sufficiens lumen in
medio, illustrans objectum.—Sa-
crobosc. Defens. Decret. Trident.
&c. cap. 6. part. 1. p. 92, 93.

ⁱ Jam igitur qui ab autoritate
ecclesiæ recedunt, et contenti
sunt veritates fidei esse in scrip-
turis a Deo revelatas, sibi pro-
mittentes Spiritus Sancti con-
cursum ad actus fidei eliciendos,
sufficiente proponente carent, at-
que similiter faciunt, ac qui sine
lumine sibi promitteret conspec-
tum colorum in area, eo quod
habeat colores ante oculos positos
et præditus sit facultate videndi;
cum qua Deus paratus est quoties
volumus concurrere. Nam nunc

mortui sunt prophetæ, mortui
apostoli, Christus in cælum re-
cessit, et nobis omnium loco
reliquit ecclesiam; cujus autho-
ritatem cum adhuc in terris age-
ret ipse stabilivit, et tum mira-
culis, tum aliis rationibus con-
firmavit, et quantum opus est
etiam nunc confirmat. Hæc nos-
tra vult magistra sit, hanc audi-
amus, ab hac quid a Deo per
prophetas et apostolos dictum
sit, et quo sensu unumquodque
intelligendum sit, accipiamus:
neque expectandum est, ut Deus
temere, et passim per interni lu-
minis copiam nobis suppleat vi-
cem propositionis externæ, ut
fecit primo parenti, et Paulo,
qui *neque ab homine, neque per
hominem, sed per revelationem
Jesu Christi accepit evangelium*:
hæc enim privilegia sunt.—Sa-
crob. p. 94 et 95. Def. Decret.
Trid. et Sent. Bellarm. cap. 6.
par. 1.

parent, or St. Paul, who had his *gospel neither from man, nor by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*: for those are privileges."

560 6. The calumny intended in this last instance hath often heretofore been prevented. We never denied either the necessity or sufficiency of the church's proposal, as an external mean; we account no other of that rank and nature is, or could be, either more necessary or more sufficient. St. Paul, we grant, had an extraordinary privilege, and yet for his private information had the truth proposed unto him by Ananias^k, though the gifts of his public ministry were immediately from God. Both the measure of his faith and manner of attaining it were unusual; but his faith itself, once attained, no otherwise independent of any external proposal than ours is, and all Christians' must be. We should have been more beholden to this professor, had he distinctly told us what it is in their language to have a sufficient proposer: albeit this we may gather from his words late cited, and these following¹: "The sectaries take upon them to correct the church's sentence as oft as they list, and then they oppose Christ to the church, as if the church did propose one thing, and Christ teach another. If they admitted any church as a sufficient proposer, they were bound to conform their opinions to it in all things." As you heard before out of Bellarmine^m, That the pope's decrees may not be examined whether consonant or contrary to God's word or the foundations of faith, already laid in our hearts; and out of Canusⁿ, That we must believe the church absolutely, without *ifs* or *ands*. Thus believing we have God's word sufficiently proposed; without this belief or acknowledgment of

^k Acts ix. 17.

¹ The Latin are quoted parag. 4.

^m Cap. 9. parag. 12, 13.

ⁿ Cap. 1. parag. 11.

such authority in the church, we have no sufficient proposal of it, but strive as foolishly to hear God speak, as if we sought to see colours without the light.

7. It appears, I hope, as clearly to the reader as to me, that the church's testimony or authority (by our adversaries' doctrine) benefits none but such as steadfastly and absolutely believe it in all things. But he that so believes it may by it easily believe all other points, as he that can perfectly see the light may see colours by it. Want of this radical belief in us makes our faith (in their opinion) so unstable, or rather blind and dead. Yet can I hardly persuade myself all of them will grant the church adds any inherent or participated splendor to Divine revelations, whereby they become perspicuous in themselves, as colours are made visible by irradiation of the sun. Thus much notwithstanding, all of them, I know, willingly would subscribe unto: A protestant can neither of himself be infallibly persuaded of the truth of scriptures, or other conclusions of faith; nor doth he absolutely believe any others, that are infallible in their determinations: but a Roman catholic, albeit by his private spirit he cannot infallibly believe them, yet he infallibly believes the church, which cannot err in belief. All then that a papist hath more than a protestant is this—his belief of the church: if once he doubt of this, he is where he was: which in plain terms is as much as to say, He believes the church concerning scriptures, not scriptures^o. That this is the true interpretation of their tenent may easily be gathered from their own writings. For Bellarmine^p expressly contends, and all of them suppose that saying of St. Austin^q, *Non crederem evangelio*, 561

^o See cap. 3. parag. 12, 13.

^p Bellar. lib. 3. de Verbo Dei, cap. 8. Sacrob. pag. 133.

^q Sacroboscus his instances to elude Doctor Whitaker's argument (as he proposed it) do plain-

nisi me commoveret ecclesiæ autoritas—"I would not believe the gospel, unless the church's authority did thereto move me"—to be true, as well after faith is produced, whilst it continues, as whiles it is in planting. Now if a man should say, *Non crederem Francisco, nisi me commoveret Petri fidelitas*; "I would not trust Francis, but for Peter's word;" this speech resolved into its natural or proper sense is equivalent unto this: "I do not trust Francis, but Peter that gives his word for him." And in case Peter should prove false, or be distrusted by him that took his word for Francis, as yet not believed but for Peter's sake, the creditor could have no hold of either. Thus if Bellarmine and his fellows be (as they would seem to make St. Austin) minded not to believe the gospel but for the church's authority or proposal of it; let them speak plainly and properly, not in parables or metaphors, and so we shall know their meaning to be, That they indeed believe not the scriptures, but the church;

ly confirm our inference. At urget Whitakerus: cum Augustinus ita erat dispositus ut non crederet, nisi ipsum ecclesiæ autoritas commoveret; autoritas ecclesiæ erat sola causa fidei ipsius, ergo fides quam tunc habebat non erat divina: nam hæc præter auctoritatem ecclesiæ respicit etiam auctoritatem Dei. Probat antecedens, nam particula (*nisi*) omnes alias causas removet, præter eam cujus fit expressa mentio: hujus autem rei testes vocat omnes grammaticos. Verum meminisse debuisset regulæ D. Dionisii: "Bonum ex integra causa, malum autem ex quolibet defectu." Ut ponatur effectus, necesse est omnes causas concurrere; at ut impediatur satis

est unam deesse. Itaque omnes istæ propositiones sunt veræ. Nisi Augustinus (quem etiam ipse fatetur sanctum, immo sanctissimum) habuisset intellectum, non fuisset beatus. [Nisi fuisset Deus, Augustinus non fuisset beatus] [Nisi habuisset fidem Augustinus, non fuisset beatus.] pag. 133. Now as the particle (*nisi*) in his first instance excludes all creatures save intelligent; in the second, all intelligent, save such as shall enjoy the sight of God; in his third, all save the faithful, from blessedness: so in this our instance, the same particle excludes all credence of the gospel, beside that credence we give unto the church.

or the church truly and really, the scriptures only by extrinsical denomination.

8. Nor can they reply either consequently to Sacroboscus' instance or their general tenents, that as he which sees colours by the light truly sees colours, not the light only; so he that believes scriptures by the church's infallible proposal, believes not the church's proposal only, but scriptures as truly and properly. The diversity of reason in these two consequences ariseth from the diverse manner of seeing colours by the sun's light, and believing scriptures by the church; which we are now to gather from this short catechism containing the sum of Roman faith.

CHAP. XXX.

562

Declaring how the first main Ground of Romish Faith leads directly unto Atheism; the second, unto preposterous Heathenism or Idolatry.

I. IT is a pretty sophism (as a judicious and learned divine, in his public exercise for his first degree in divinity, late well observed) wherewith the Jesuit de-ludes the simple, making them believe their faith, otherwise weak and unsettled, is most firm and certain, if it have once the visible or representative church's confirmation; whenas the church so taken seldom or never instructs or confirms any, at least not the hundred thousandth part of them, unto whose salvation such confirmation is by Jesuitical^r persuasions most absolutely necessary. But suppose the visible church or Romish consistory, the pope and his cardinals, should

^r Cum dicimus propositionem ecclesiæ esse conditionem necessariam ad assensum fidei, Nomine ecclesiæ intelligimus ejus caput, i. Romanum pontificem per se, vel una cum concilio, ex præ-

dicta autoritate propositiones fidei fidelibus declarantem.—Valent. tom. 3. in Aq. Disput. 2. quæst. 1. de objecto fidei, punct. 1. [§. 7.] Vide Annot. ex Bel-larmino, cap. 25. parag. 2.

vouchsafe to catechise any, the dialogue between them and the catechised would thus proceed :

Consist. Do ye believe these sacred volumes to be the word of God? *Catech.* We do. *Cons.* Are you certain they are? *Catech.* So we hope. *Cons.* How can your hope be sure? for Mahomet saith his Alcoran is, sundry other heretics say their feigned revelations or false traditions are God's word : how can you assure us ye may not be deceived as well as they? Are not many of them as good scholars as you? *Catech.* Yes indeed, and better. *Cons.* Are not you subject unto error as well as they? *Catech.* Would God we were not! *Cons.* What must you do then to be ascertained these are Divine revelations? *Catech.* Nay, we know not: but this is that which we especially desire to know, and would bind ourselves in any bond to such as could teach us. *Cons.* Well said: do you not think it reason, then, to be ruled in this case by such as cannot be deceived? *Catech.* It is meet we should. *Cons.* Lo, we are the men; we are the true visible church, placed in authority by Christ himself for this purpose. These scriptures tell you plainly as much, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram*^s &c. His holiness, whom here you see, is Peter's successor; sole heir of that promise, far more glorious than the Jewish church ever had any.

2. This^t is the very quintessence and extraction

^s Ad quintum dico, nos non gloriari in templis, et successionem episcoporum, et apostolica sede secundum se, sed propter Christi promissionem, qui ait, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram* &c. *et portæ inferi non prævalebunt*, &c. Qualem promissionem Judæi nunquam habuerunt.—Bell. l. 3. de Eccles. Milit. c. 6.

^t Fides divina (quod omnes norunt) licet obscura sit, certa tamen est et quidem magis quam scientia. Isti vero de suis dogmatibus sint oportet incerti: nam quicquid credunt, hac sola de causa ex parte objecti credunt, quod ita putant scripturam sentire; in quo judicio cum sint obnoxii errori, non possunt certo

of huge and corpulent volumes written in this argument, which our English mountebanks sent hither from the seminaries, venditate as a Paracelsian medicine, able to make men immortal. The sum of all that others write, or they allege, is this: Every one may pretend what writings he lists to be the word of God; who shall be the infallible judge, either of written or unwritten revelations? must not the church? for she is *magistra et judex fidei*. These are the words, and this is the very argument, wherein Valentian's soul, it seems, did most delight, he useth them so oft. But to proceed: the parties catechised thus by the visible church itself, should any protestant enter dialogue with them how they know those received scriptures to be the word of God, could answer, I trow, sufficiently to this question thus: Marry, sir, we know better than you; for we heard the visible church, which cannot err, say so, with our own ears. *Prot.* You are most certain then that these are the oracles of God, because the visible church (God's living oracle) did bear testimony of them? *Catech.* Yea, sir, and their testimony is most infallible. *Prot.* But what if you doubt again of their infallibilities? How will you answer this objection: Mahomet saith his Alcoran is scripture; the Turkish priests will tell you as much, *viva voce*, and shew you, if you be disposed to believe them, evident places therein for his infallibility? Manes could say that he had Divine revelations. The pope pretends he

statuere, se reipsa non errare. Confirmatur: nam sibi plus tribuere nequeunt quam Luthero, Calvino, aut sanctis patribus; horum autem judicio se dicunt non teneri, et hoc ideo quod homo quilibet, quantumvis sanctus, et Spiritu plenus, errare

possit. Quare cum generalis sententia ab illis data, ipsos quoque comprehendit, quippe qui extra hominum numerum non sunt, sequitur eos adeo incertos esse de suis, ac de aliorum interpretationibus.—Sacrob. Def. Dec. Trid. cap. 6. part. 1. p. 80.

hath this infallibility, which neither of them had. Who shall judge? the consistory? But why should you think they may not err as well as others? Did they shew you any evidence out of scriptures, or did they bring you to such entire acquaintance with their public spirit, as to approve yourselves divine critics of all questions concerning the canon, as oft as any doubt should arise? *Catech.* Oh no, these audacious criticisms of private men they utterly detest, and forewarned us upon pain of damnation to beware of. For there is no private person but may err, and for such to judge of scriptures were presumption justly damnable. Rely they must for this reason upon the church's infallibility, and that continually. It alone cannot; without it all others may err, as well as Manes, Mahomet, Nestorius, or Eutyches; undoubtedly believing it cannot err, we ourselves are as free from error, as he that follows such good counsel given by others as he cannot give himself, is more secure than he that altogether follows his own advice, albeit better able to counsel others than the former. *Prot.* Then I perceive your only holdfast in all temptations, your only anchor when any blasts of vain doctrine arise, is this: The present Romish church cannot err: for if you doubt of any doctrine taught to the contrary, ask her, and she will resolve you; or if you cannot see the truth in itself, yet believe without all wavering as she believes that sees it, and you shall be as safe as if you rode in the harbour in a storm. *Catech.* Ah yes, God's holy name be praised, who hath so well provided for his church; for otherwise heretics and schismatics would shake and toss her, even in this main point or ground of faith, as evil spirits do ships in tempests: we must either hold this test sure, or else all is gone. God hath left off speaking unto men, and we cannot tell whether ever

he spake to them or no, but as the present church, which speaks *viva voce*, tells us.

3. But the reader perhaps expects what inconvenience will hence follow. First, hereby it is apparent, that belief of scriptures' divine truth, and their true sense, absolutely and immediately depends upon the church's proposal, or rather upon their belief of what it proposeth, as well after they are confirmed in that general point, That they are God's words, as in the instant of their confirmation in it. The first necessary consequence of which opinion is, That the church must be more truly and properly believed, than any part of scriptures or matter contained in it. For in this matter of dependence that transcendent rule of nature, 'Αεὶ δι' ὃ ὑπάρχει ἑκαστον ἐκεῖνο μᾶλλον ὑπάρχει^x, hath its proper force; whether we speak of the essence, existence, or quality of things being or existing; that upon which any other thing thus absolutely and continually depends doth more properly and really exist, and hath much firmer interest in its essence and existence, than aught can have which depends upon it. One there is, and no more, that can truly say, My essence is mine own, and my existence necessary. Whatsoever is besides, is but a shadow or picture borrowed from his infinite being. Amongst created entities, all essentially depending on Him, accidents have a kind of existence peculiar to themselves; yet cannot so properly be said to exist, as their subjects, on whom they have such double dependence. Nor can the moon so truly say, My beauty is my own, as may the sun, which lends light and splendour to this his sister, as it were upon condition she never use it but in his sight. For the same reason, That for which we believe another thing

^u See cap. 29. sect. 5.

^x Arist. 1. 1. Analyt. Post. cap. 2.

is always more truly, more really, and more properly believed, than that which is believed for it, if the one belief necessarily depend upon the other, *Tam in facto esse quam in fieri*, from the first beginning to the latter end. For of beliefs thus mutually affected, the one is real and radical, the other nominal, or at the most by participation only real. This consequence is unsound—Intellective knowledge depends on sensitive: therefore sensitive is of these two the surer.—The reason is, because intellective knowledge depends on sensitive only in the acquisition, not after it is acquired. But this inference is most undoubted;—We believe the conclusion for the premises: therefore we believe the premises the better;—because belief of the conclusion absolutely depends upon the premises, during the whole continuance of it. This is the great philosopher's rule, and a branch of the former axiom. And some justly question, whether in scholastic propriety of speech we can truly say there is a belief of the conclusion distinct from the belief of the premises; or rather, the belief of the premises is by extrinsical denomination attributed unto the conclusion. This latter opinion, at least in many syllogisms, is the truer; most necessarily true in all, wherein the conclusion is a particular, essentially subordinate to an universal of truth unquestionable. As he that infallibly believes every man is a reasonable creature, infallibly believes Socrates is such: nor can we say there be two distinct beliefs, one of the universal, another of this particular; for he that saith all, excepteth none. If Socrates then make one in the catalogue of men, he that formerly knew all, knew him to be a reasonable creature; all he had to learn was, what was meant by this name Socrates, a man or a beast; after he knows him to be a man, in knowing him to be a reasonable creature, he knows no

more than he did before in that universal, Every man is a reasonable creature. The like consequence holds as firm in our present argument; he that believes this universal—Whatsoever the church proposeth concern-⁵⁶⁵ ing scriptures is most true—hath no more to learn, but only what particulars the church proposeth. These being known, we cannot imagine there should be two distinct beliefs; one of the church's general infallibility, another of the particular truths or points of faith (contained in the scripture) proposed by it. For as in the former case, so in this, he that from the church's proposal believes or knows this particular, The Book of Revelations was from God, receives no increase of former belief: for before, he believed all the church did propose; and therefore this particular, because one of all.

4. The truth of this conclusion may again, from a main principle of Romish faith, be thus demonstrated^y:

^y Sacrosancta, œcumenica, et generalis Tridentina synodus in Spiritu Sancto legitime congregata, præsidentibus in ea eisdem tribus apostolicæ sedis legatis, hoc sibi perpetuo ante oculos proponens, ut sublatis erroribus, puritas ipsa evangelii in ecclesia conservetur: quod promissum ante per prophetas in scripturis sanctis, Dominus noster Jesus Christus, Dei Filius, proprio ore primum promulgavit; deinde per suos apostolos, tanquam fontem omnis, et salutaris veritatis, et morum disciplinæ, omni creaturæ prædicari jussit: perspicuensque hanc veritatem, et disciplinam contineri in libris scriptis, et sine scripto traditionibus, quæ ex ipsius Christi ore ab apostolis acceptæ, aut ab ipsis apostolis, Spiritu Sancto dictante, quasi per manus

traditæ, ad nos usque pervenerunt, orthodoxorum patrum exempla secuta, omnes libros tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, cum utriusque unus Deus sit auctor, nec non traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem tum ad mores pertinentes, tanquam vel ore tenus a Christo, vel a Spiritu Sancto dictatas, et continua successione in ecclesia catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu, ac reverentia suscipit, et veneratur.—Concil. Trident. Sess. 4. Decret. de Canonicis Scripturis. And a little after, having reckoned up the apocryphal books with the canonical, they thus conclude: Si quis autem libros ipsos integros cum omnibus suis partibus, prout in ecclesia catholica legi consueverunt, et in veteri vulgata Latina editione habentur,

Whatsoever unwritten traditions the church shall propose, though yet unheard of, or impossible otherwise to be known than only by the church's asseveration, all Romanists are bound as certainly to believe, as devoutly to embrace, as any truths contained in the written word, acknowledged by us, the Jews, and them, for divine. Now if either from their own experience, the joint consent of sincere antiquity, or testimony of God's Spirit speaking to them in private, or what means soever else possible or imaginable, they gave any absolute credence unto the written word, or matters contained in it, besides that they give unto the church's general veracity; the scriptures by addition of this credence (were it great or little) arising from these grounds peculiar to them, must needs be more firmly believed and embraced, than such unwritten traditions as are in themselves suspicious, incapable of other credit than what they borrow from the church. For in respect of the church's proposal, which is one and the same, alike peremptory in both, scriptures and traditions (of what kind soever) must be equally believed. And if such traditions as can have no assurance besides the church's testimony, must be as well believed as scriptures, or divine truths contained in them; the former conclusion is evidently necessary, That they neither believe the scriptures, nor the truths contained in them; but the church's proposal of them only. For the least belief of any divine truth, added to belief of

pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit; et traditiones prædictas sciens et prudens contempserit; anathema sit. Omnes itaque intelligant, quo ordine et via, ipsa synodus, post jactum fidei confessionis fundamentum, sit progressura, et quibus potissimum

testimoniis, ac præsiidiis in confirmandis dogmatibus, et instaurandis in ecclesia moribus, sit usura.—The council was very wise in not expressing as well what unwritten traditions, as written books, they meant to follow.

the church's proposal, which equally concerns written and unwritten verities, would dissolve the former equality. But that, by the Trent council, may not be dissolved. Therefore our adversaries in deed and verity believe no scriptures, nor divine written truth, but the church's proposal only concerning them. And Sacroboscus^z bewrays his readiness to believe the church 566 as absolutely as any Christian can do God or Christ, though no tittle of the New Testament were extant. For, "That the church cannot err, was an oracle revealed by God, proposed by the church, and believed by the faithful, before any part of the New Testament was written." Now he that without the gospel of Jesus Christ would believe the doctrines of faith as firmly as with it, believes not the gospel which now he hath, but their authorities only, upon which, though we had it not, he would as absolutely rely for all matters of doctrine supposed to be contained in it.

5. Or further to illustrate the truth of our conclusion with this Jesuit's former comparison, which hath best illustrated the Romish church's tenent. That church, in respect of the canon of scriptures or any part thereof, is as the light is to colours. As no colour can be seen of us but by the light; so, by his doctrine, neither the canon of scriptures, or any part thereof, can be known without the church's testimony. Again, as

^z Respondeo: Orthodoxos omnes certos esse ecclesiam circa fidem non posse errare, proindeque nec dubitare ejus sententiæ acquiescere. Hoc enim inter cætera revelata tanquam a Deo dictum, ab ipsa matre ecclesia acceperunt: quæ quidem veritas, ante scriptam ullam Novi Testamenti partem et dicta a Deo, et ab ecclesia proposita, et a fideli-

bus credita fuit: et hodie quoque crederetur, etiamsi Novi Testamenti ne unus quidem apex scriptus extaret; quemadmodum revelatæ veritates a fidelibus credebantur per annos bis mille in statu legis naturæ ante exaratum a Mose Pentateuchum.—Sacrob. Def. Decr. Trid. et Sent. Bell. c. 6. par. 1. pag. 109.

removal of light presently makes us lose the sight of colours, so doubt or denial of the church's authority deprives us of all true and steadfast belief concerning God's word, or any matter contained in it: God (as they plead) hath revealed his will obscurely; and unto a distinct or clear apprehension of what is obscurely revealed, the visible church's declaration is no less necessary, than light to discernment of colours. The reason is one in both, and is this: As the actual visibility of colours wholly depends upon the light, as well for existence as duration; so (by Jesuitical doctrine) true belief of scriptures wholly depends on the visible church's declaration, as well during the whole continuance, as the first producing of it. By the same reason, as we gather that light in itself is more visible than colours, seeing by it alone colours become actually visible; so will it necessarily follow, that the church's declaration (that is, the pope's privilege for not erring) is more steadfastly to be believed, as more credible in itself, than either the canon of scriptures, or any thing therein contained: because these become actually credible unto us only by the church's declaration, which cannot possibly aught avail for their belief, unless it were better believed.

6. Perhaps the reader will here challenge me, that this last instance proves not all that I proposed in the title of this chapter. For it only proves the pope's supremacy is better to be believed, than that Christ is come in the flesh; that God did ever speak to men in former ages by his prophets, and in latter by his Son. But this infers no absolute alienation of our belief from Christ, seeing even in this respect that we believe the church or pope so well, we must needs believe that Christ is come in the flesh, and that God hath spoken to us sundry ways; for thus much the pope avoucheth.

Yea, but what if the church teach us that Christ is our Lord and Redeemer, and yet urge us to do that which is contumelious to his majesty? What if it teach us that these scriptures are God's word, and yet bind us by her infallible decrees to break his laws, and give his Spirit the lie? Should we make profession of believing as the pope teacheth, and yet take his meaning to be only such as Marnixius, whom we better believe, would make it? His holiness would quickly 567 pronounce us apostates from the catholic faith. Or if this suffice not the indifferent reader for satisfying my former promise, let him have patience but for a while, and I will pay him all.

7. Their first main position, "That no private man can certainly know the canon of scriptures to be God's word, but by relying upon the present church," infers as much as hath been said: much more will follow from their second, "That no man can certainly be persuaded of the true sense and meaning of particular propositions contained in the general canon, without the same church's testimony, unto whom the authentic interpretation or dijudication of scriptures wholly belongs." Imagine the former parties, now fully persuaded of the scriptures' Divine truth in general, should, by the consistory which late catechised them, be questioned about the meaning of some particular places. *Consist.* We hope you adore the consecrated host with Divine worship, as oft as you meet it in procession. *Catech.* Desirous we are to do any thing that becomes good Christians, and obedient sons unto our holy mother the church; but we cannot satisfy our consciences how this may stand with the principles of Christianity. Your holinesses (for which we rest yours unto death) have assured us these sacred volumes are the very words of God, and his words we know

The two main branches of Romish infidelity springing from her former two positions.

must be obeyed. Now since we know these to be his words, we have found it written in them, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*^a. It is, we doubt, our simplicity that will not suffer us to conceive how the consecrated host can be adored as God without open breach of his commandment. For, to our shallow understanding, there is no necessity to persuade us Christ, God and man, should be hid in it. These words, *Hoc est corpus meum*, may bear many interpretations, no way pregnant to this purpose. And it is doubtful whether Christ's body, though really present in the sacrament, should retain the same presence in procession; whereas the former commandment is plain, *We must worship the Lord our God, and him only must we serve. Consist.* Ye think this text is plain to your purpose; we think otherwise. Whether is more meet, ye to submit your private opinions to our public spirits, or us that are pastors to learn of you silly sheep? *Catech.* Therefore are your servants come unto you, that they may learn how to obey you in this decree without idolatry; well hoping, that as ye enjoin us absolutely to obey you in it, so ye can give us full assurance we shall not disobey the Spirit of God, in the former great commandment, whose exposition we most desire.

8. Would these or like supplications, though conceived in Christian modesty, though proposed with religious fear, and awful regard of their persons, though presented with tears and sighs, or other more evident signs of inward sorrow, find any entrance into Romish prelates' ears, or move the masters of the inquisition house to forbear exaction of obedience to the former, or other decree of the Trent council, were the form of the decree itself, unto private judgments, never so con-

^a Matt. iv. 10.

tradictory to God's express written laws, or the consequence of practising as it prescribes never so dreadful to the doubtful conscience? How much better, then, were it for such silly souls, had they never known the books of Moses to have been from God! for so committing idolatry with stocks and stones, or other creatures, they had done what was displeasing to their Master, and justly punishable; yet *with fewer stripes*^b, because his will was not made known unto them. But now they know it, and acknowledge the truth of this commandment. To what end? That they may be left without all excuse for not doing it. They see the general truth of God's oracles, that they may be more desperately blinded in wilful perverting the particulars. For what glory could the allurements of silly ignorant men to simple idolatry be unto great Antichrist? Let them first subscribe to the written laws of the everliving God, and afterwards wholly submit themselves to his determinations for their practice, and so the opposition betwixt him and the Deity, betwixt his injunctions and the decrees of the Almighty, may be more positive, more directly contrary. The heathen, or others not acknowledging God's word at all, are rightly termed *unbelievers*; men thus believing the scriptures in general to be God's word, from the testimony of the church, and yet absolutely relying upon her judgment for the meaning of particular places, are transported from unbelief to misbelief, from gross ignorance to wilful defiance of God and his laws. Finally, they are brought to know God's word, that they may doubt in this and like fearful practices enjoined; that so first doubting, and afterwards desperately resolving absolutely to follow the church's injunction, against that sense and meaning of the divine decrees which the

^b Luke xii. 48.

Holy Spirit doth dictate to their private consciences, they may without doubt be damned, for not abiding in the truth. Like their first parents they hear God's sentence, but prefer the interpretations of Satan's first-born before their own, because it must be presumed he is more subtle than they. Or to refer the two main streams of this iniquity to their proper heads: the first—That we cannot know the Old or New Testament to be God's word, but by relying upon the church—makes all subscribers to it real atheists or infidels, and Christians only in conceit or upon condition—If the church, whose authority they so highly esteem, be as infallible as is pretended. Heretofore I have much grieved at the Trent council's impiety; but now I wonder at these grave Fathers' folly, that would trouble themselves with prescribing so many canons, or over-seeing so large a catechism, whenas the beginning of Protagoras' book, one or two words altered, might have comprehended the entire confession of such men's faith as rely upon their fatherhoods; the atheist thus began his book, *De diis non habeo quod dicam, utrum sint necne*: "Concerning the gods or their being, I can say nothing." A private Roman catholic might render an entire account of his faith in terms as brief; *De Christo et Christiana fide non habeo quod dicam, utrum sint necne*: "Whether there be a Christ, or Christian religion be but a politic fable, I have nothing to say peremptorily, yea or no, the church or council can determine;" whom in this and all other points wherein God is a party, I will absolutely believe whilst I live: if at my death I find they teach amiss, let the Devil and they (if there be a Devil) decide the controversy. Yet this conceit or conditional belief of Christ and Christianity, conceived from the former, serves as a ground colour for disposing men's souls to take the

sable dye of hell, wherewith the second main stream of Romish impiety will deeply infect all such as drink of it. For once believing God's word from the church's 569 testimony, this absolute submission of their consciences to embrace that sense it shall suggest, sublimates them from refined heathenism or gentilism to diabolism or symbolizing with infernal spirits, whose chiefest solace consists in acting greatest villainies, or wresting the meaning of God's written laws to his dishonour. For just proof of which imputation, we are to prevent what (as we late intimated) might in favour of their opinion be replied to our former instance of light and colours.

9. Some perhaps well affected would be resolved, why, as he that sees colours by the sun, sees not only the sun, but colours with it; so he that believes the scriptures, by relying upon the church, should not believe the church only, but the scriptures too commended by it. The doubt could hardly be resolved, if according to our adversaries' tenent, the church's declarations did confirm our faith by illustrating the canon of scriptures, or making particular truths contained in it inherently more perspicuous: as if they were in themselves but potentially credible, and made actually such by the church's testimony, which is the first and principal credible; in such sort as colours become actually visible, by illumination of the principal and prime visible. But herein the grounds of Romish doctrine, and the instance brought by Sacroboscus to illustrate it, are quite contrary. For the light of the sun, though most necessary unto sight, is yet necessary only in respect of the object, or for making colours actually visible; which made such, or sufficiently illuminated, are instantly perceived without further intermediation of any other light than the internal light of the organ,

An objection, which might be made in favour of the Romanists, answered and refuted.

in discerning colours always rather hindered than helped by circumfusion of light external. For this reason it is that men in a pit or cave may at noonday see the stars, which are invisible to such as are in the open air: not that they are more illuminated to the one than the other, but because plenty of light doth hinder the organ or eyesight of the one. Generally all objects, either actually visible in themselves, or sufficiently illuminated, are better perceived in darkness than in the light. But so our adversaries will not grant, that after the church hath sufficiently proposed the whole canon to be God's word, the distinct meaning of every part is more clear and facile to all private spirits, by how much they less participate of the visible church's further illustration. For (quite contrary to the former instance) the church's testimony or declaration is only necessary, or available to right belief, in respect, not of the object to be believed, (scriptures,) but of the party believing. For (as hath been observed) no man in their judgment can believe God's word, or the right meaning of it, but by believing the church: and all belief is inherent in the believer. Yea this undoubted belief of the church's authority is that, which in Bellarmine and Sacroboscus's judgment, makes a Roman catholic's belief of scriptures, or divine truths taught by them, much better than a protestant's. If otherwise the church's declaration or testimony could, without the belief of its infallibility, which is inherent in the subject believing, make scriptures credible, as the light doth colours visible in themselves; a protestant that knew their church's meaning might as truly
570 believe them as a Roman catholic, albeit he did not absolutely believe the church, but only use her help for their orthodoxal interpretation, as he doth ordinary

^c See cap. 2. et cap. 29.

expositors, or as many do the benefit of the sun for seeing colours, which never think whether colours may be seen without it or no. For though it be certain that they cannot, yet this opinion is merely accidental to their sight: and if a man should be so wilful as to maintain the contrary, it would argue only blindness of mind, none of his bodily sight. Nor should distrust of the Romish church's authority aught diminish our belief of any Divine truth, were her declarations requisite in respect of the object to be believed, not in respect of the subject believing.

10. Hence ariseth that difference which plainly resolves the former doubt. For seeing the sun makes colours actually visible, by adding virtue or lustre to them; we may rightly say, we see colours as truly as the light by which we see them. For though without the benefit of it they cannot be seen, yet are they not seen by seeing it, or by relying upon its testimony of them. Again, because the use of light is only necessary in respect of the object, or for presenting colours to the eye; after once they be sufficiently illuminated or presented, every creature endued with sight can immediately discern each from other, without any further help or benefit of external light, than the general whereby they become all alike actually visible at the same instant. The sun's light then is the true cause why colours are seen; but no cause of our distinguishing one from another being seen, or made actually visible by it. For of all sensible objects sufficiently proposed, the sensitive faculty, though seated in a private person, is the sole immediate supreme judge, and relies not upon any other's more public verdict of them. On the contrary, because the Romanist's supposed firm belief of scriptures, or their true meaning, ariseth only from his undoubted belief of the church's veracity which is in

the believer as in its subject, not from any increase of inherent credibility or perspicuity thence propagated to the scriptures; hence it is, that consequently to his positions, most repugnant to all truth, he thinks, after the church hath sufficiently avouched the scriptures' Divine truth in general, we cannot infallibly distinguish the true sense and meaning of one place from another, but must herein also rely upon the church's testimony; and only believe that sense to be repugnant, that consonant to the analogy of faith, which she shall tender; albeit our private consciences be never so well informed by other scriptures to the contrary. The truth then of our former conclusion is hence easily manifested. For seeing they hold both the scriptures and their distinct sense to be obscure, and unable to ascertain themselves, unless the church add perspicuity or facility of communicating their meaning to private spirits; such, after the church's proposal, cannot possibly discern them any better or more directly in themselves, than they did before, but must wholly rely upon their prelates, as if these were the only watchmen in the tower of God's church that could by virtue of their place discern all Divine truth. Others must believe there is an omnipotent God which hath given this law; a mediator of the New Testament: but what the meaning either of Law or Gospel is, they may not presume otherwise to determine, than weak sights do of things they see confusedly afar off, whose particular distance or difference they must take only upon other men's report that have seen them distinctly and at hand.

11. To illustrate these deductions with the former similitude of the prime and secondary visibles. Let us suppose for disputation's sake, that the sun which illuminates colours by its light, were further endued (as we are) with sense and reason, able to judge of all the differences between them which it can manifest to us,

and hence challenge to be a pope or infallible proposer of colours. This supposition the canonist hath made less improbable. For “*Deus fecit duo luminaria,*” *God made two lights*, that is, by his interpretation, the pope and the emperor. Or if you please to mitigate the harshness of it, let the man in the moon, whom we may not imagine speechless, be supposed the sun or pope of colours, his Mercury or nuncio. As the papists say, we cannot know scriptures to be scriptures, but by the infallible proposal of the church; so it is evident we cannot see any colour at all, unless illuminated or proposed by the sun’s light. But after by it we see them, suppose we should take upon us to discourse of their nature, or determine of their distinct properties as now we do, and the sun or pope of colours by himself or his nuncio should take us up, as duke Humphrey did the blind man restored to sight, which he never had lost; yea, “who taught you to distinguish colours? were you not quite blind but now?” As yet you cannot discern any colours without my public light, and yet will you presume to define their properties, and distinguish their natures against my definitive sentence known? Must not he that enables you to see them, enable you to distinguish them seen? Must you not wholly rely upon my authority, whether this be white or that black? If a man upon these motives should absolutely believe the sun’s determinations, renouncing the judgment of his private senses; could he truly say that he either knew this colour to be white, or that black, or another green? Rather were he not bound to say, I neither know white from black, nor black from blue, nor blue from green; but I know that to be white which the sun, the only infallible judge of colours, saith is white; that only to be black, that blue, and that green, which

he shall determine so to be. I may think indeed that the snow is white or coals black, but with submission to the sun's determination.

12. And yet, as you have heard at large out of the Trent council, and best apologies can be made for it, the church must be the infallible judge of all scripture sense, and must absolutely be believed without all appeal to scriptures, not conditionally as she shall accord with them. The conclusion hence issuing is most infallible, and on their parts most inevitable; "Whosoever absolutely acknowledgeth this authority in the church or consistory, and yields such obedience unto it in all determinations, concerning the canon of scriptures, doth not believe either this or that determinate proposition of faith, or any definite meaning of God's word." The best resolution he can make of his faith is this; "I believe that to be the meaning of every place, which the church shall define to be the meaning:"
 572 which is all one as if he had said, I do not believe the scriptures or their meaning, but I believe the church's decision and sentence concerning them. "He that believes not the church," saith Canus^d, "but with this limitation—if it give sentence according unto scriptures,—doth not believe the church but the scriptures." By the same reason it follows most directly; he that believes not the true sense and meaning of scriptures, but with this reservation—if the church so think or determine,—doth not believe them, but the church only. For as the schoolmen say, *Ubi unum propter aliud, ibi unum tantum*. He that serves God only because he

^d Nihil igitur afferunt, qui ecclesiæ auctoritatem non absolute, sed ex conditione ponunt. Si namque ad eum modum res habet, et mihi quoque fides habenda est, quando pronunciavero

secundum scripturas recte intellectas. Id enim est non mihi, sed scripturæ credere. Canus, lib. 4. cap. 4. See cap. 1. parag. 11.

would be rich, doth not serve God, but his riches, albeit he perform the outward acts of obedience. Or if we love a man only for his affinity with another whom we dearly love, we truly and properly love but the one, the other only by way of reflexion or denomination; in such a sense as we say, a man appears by his proxy, that is, his proxy appears, not he. In like sort, believing the sense of scriptures only from the supposed authentic declaration of the church, or because we believe it, we infallibly believe the church alone, not the scriptures, but only by an extrinsical denomination.

13. Yet as a man may from some reasons less probable, have an opinion of what he certainly knows, by motives more sound; or as we may love one in some competent measure for his own sake, and yet affect him more entirely for another's whom we most dearly love: so may an absolute papist, in some moral sort believe the scriptures for themselves, or hold their orthodoxal sense as probable to his private judgment; albeit he believe them most for the church's sake, and that sense best which it commends. But this his belief of the church, being by their doctrine more than moral or conditional, doth quite overthrow all moral or probable belief he can possibly have from what ground soever of scriptures themselves. For as I said before, when the church shall determine aught contrary to his preconceived opinion, the more probable or strong it

The greater moral or historical belief the Romanist hath of the truth or true meaning of scriptures, the greater his condemnation by subscription to this doctrine of the church's absolute infallibility.

^e This argument holds (as we say) *a fortiori* of faith infused: for no man can be so fully persuaded, that he hath Divine faith infused of any point, but must renounce his persuasion when the church defines the contrary: whose definition or asseveration, be it a cause or condition of believing, will fully persuade the

Romanist, that he now hath Divine infused faith of the contrary to that he believed before. For his Divine infused faith and his habit of theology may not disagree, and yet in this case his habit of theology may not yield unto the other, because it hath the church's testimony, which (it is supposed) the other wanteth.

was, the more it increaseth his doubt, and makes his contrary resolution more desperate, yea more damnable if habitual, because κατ' ἐξοχὴν οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως, extremely contrary to the doctrine of faith. Bellarmine's prescription in this case is just as if a physician or surgeon should seek to ease the pain by ending of the patient's days. Lest a man should sin against his conscience, this doctor adviseth him to believe the church cannot teach amiss.

14. To conclude then: he that absolutely believes the pope, as Christ's vicar general in all things, without examination of his decrees by evangelical precepts, neither believes Christ nor his gospel; no, not when this pretended vicar teacheth no otherwise than his Master's laws prescribe. For thus believing a Divine truth only from this man's authority, he commits such idolatry with him (for the kind or essence) as the heathen did with Mercury, their false god's supposed messenger, though so much more heinous in degree, as his general notion of the true God is better, whose infinite goodness cannot entertain an interpreter no better qualified than most popes are, did his wisdom stand in need of any. But if when the pope shall teach the doctrine of devils, men absolutely believe it to be Christ's, because his pretended vicar commends it to them; in thus believing they commit such preposterous idolatry, as those of Calecut, which adore the Devil, upon conceit, doubtless, of some celestial or Divine power in him; as the absolute papist doth not adore the pope, but upon persuasion he is Christ's vicar, and teaches as Christ would do, *viva voce*, were he again on earth. And less it were to be lamented, did these pseudo-catholics profess their allegiance to Satan's incarnate agent, as to their supreme Lord, by

^f See the notes out of Bellarmine, cap. 3 parag. 10.

such solemn sacrifices only as the inhabitants of Calecut perform to wicked spirits. But this their blind belief of whatsoever he shall determine upon a proud and foolish imagination he is Christ's vicar, emboldens them to invert the whole law of God and nature, to glory in villainy, and triumph in mischief, even to seek praise and honour eternal, from acts so foul and hideous, as the light of nature would make the Calecutians or other idolaters blush at their very mention. It is a sure token he hath not yet learned the alphabet of their religion, that doubts whether Jesuitical doctrine concerning this absolute belief, extend not to all matters of fact. And if out of simplicity, rather than policy, so they speak; I cannot but much pity their folly, that would persuade us it were not the fault of Romish religion, but of the men that profess it, which hath enticed so many unto such devilish practices of late. I would the Jesuit were but put to instance what kind of villainy either hath been already acted on earth, or can yet possibly be hatched in the region under the earth, so hideous and ugly, as would seem deformed or odious to such as are wholly led by this blind faith, if it should but please the Romish clergy to give a mild or favourable censure of it. No brat of hell but would seem as beautiful to their eyes, as young toads are to their dams, if their mother once commend the feature of it, or acknowledge it for her darling. Did not some of the powder-plot, after God's powerful hand had overtaken them, and sentence of death had passed upon them, even when the executioner was ready to do his last office to them, make a question whether their plot were sinful or no? So modest were some of them, and so obedient sons to the church of Rome, that they would not take upon them to say either the one or other, but referred the matter to their mother's determinations; hereby testi-

That this doctrine emboldens such as embrace it to glory in villainy.

fyng unto the world, that if the church would say, they would believe so great an offence against their country were none against God. One of them was so obstinate as to solicit his fellow, whilst both were drawn upon one hurdle to the gallows, not to acknowledge it for any sin. Or if these must be reputed but private men, not well acquainted with their church's tenents, and therefore no fit instances to disapprove her doctrine; let the ingenious reader but peruse their best writers' answers to the objections usually made against the pope's transcendent authority, and he shall easily perceive how matters of fact are included in the belief of it; how by it all power is given him in heaven and earth, to pervert the use and end of all laws human or Divine. I will content myself for this present with some few instances out of Valentian.

Proving the last Assertion, or generally the Imputations hitherto laid upon the Papacy, by that Authority the Jesuits expressly give unto the Pope in Matters of particular Fact, as in the Canonizing of Saints.

1. "How oft soever the pope, in defining questions of faith, shall use his authority, that opinion which he shall determine to be a point of faith, must be received as a point of faith by all Christian people^g." If you further demand, How shall we know when the

^g Quotiescunque Romanus pontifex in fidei quæstionibus definiendis, illa qua est præditus autoritate utitur, ab omnibus fidelibus tanquam doctrina fidei recipi divino præcepto debet ea sententia, quam ille decernit esse sententiam fidei. Toties autem eum illa ipsa autoritate uti cre-

dendum est, quoties in controversia fidei sic alterutram sententiam determinat, ut ad eam recipiendam obligare velit universam ecclesiam.—Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. disp. 1. quæ. 1. de object. fidei, punct. 7. parag. [39. initio.]

pope useth this his absolute authority? this doctor in the same place thus resolves you :

“ It must be believed that he useth this his authority, as often as in controversies of faith he so determines for the one part, that he will bind the whole church to receive his decision.” Lest stubborn spirits might take occasion to calumniate the pope for taking, or the Jesuits for attributing tyrannical authority unto him, this Jesuit^h would have you to understand that the pope may avouch some things which all men are not bound to hold as gospel ; nay he may err, though not when he speaks *ex cathedra*, as head of the church, yet when he speaks or writes as a private doctor or expositor, and only sets down his own opinion without binding others to think as he doth. Thus did Innocent the Third, and other popes, write divers books, which are not in every part true and infallible, as if they had proceeded from their pontifical authority. Yea, but what if this present pope, or any of his successors, should bind all Christians to believe that pope Innocent’s books were in every part infallibly true ; whether must we in this case believe Valentian, or the pope thus determining, better? If Valentian in the words immediately following deserve any credit, we must believe the pope better than himself ; yea, he himself must recant his censure of pope Innocent’s works. For so in the other

^h Distinguendi sunt modi, quibus potest contingere pontificem aliquid asserere. Primo enim potest sibi persuadere aut asserere aliquid, ut privata persona quædam, vel doctor alius quispian, ut si nollet ecclesiam universam ad recipiendam suam assertionem obligare, sed tantum sententiam ipse suam reputaret veram. Hoc modo Innocentius III. et nonnulli alii pontifices o-

puscula varia ediderunt. Ac illa quidem, quæ sic pontifex asseverat, communis sententia omnium theologorum est, non oportere esse omnia vera et infallibilia, quasi a pontificia autoritate perfecta. Quin imo a plerisque autoribus conceditur, fieri posse ; ut pontifex tanquam quædam privata persona in hæresim labatur.—Idem ibidem.

part of his distinction he addsⁱ, *Secundo, potest pontifex asserere*; “The pope again may avouch something, so as to bind the whole church to receive his opinion, and that no man shall dare to persuade himself to the contrary: and whatsoever he shall thus avouch in any controversy of religion, we must assuredly believe he did avouch it without possibility of error, and therefore by his pontifical authority.” His proof is most consonant to his assertion. I will not recite it in English, lest the mere English reader should suspect any, able to understand Latin, could be possibly so ridiculous.

575 2. These lavish prerogatives of the pope’s authority, the Jesuits see well to be obnoxious to this exception. When the pope doth canonize a saint, he binds all men to take him for a saint. Can he not herein err? “As for canonizing of saints,” (saith Valentian^k,) “I abso-

ⁱ Secundo modo potest pontifex aliquid asserere obligando universam ecclesiam ut illud recipiat, nec quispiam audeat sibi persuadere contrarium. Et quæcunque pontifex in aliqua de religione controversia sic asserit, certa fide credendum est, illum infallibiliter, ac proinde ex auctoritate pontificia, hoc est, ex divina assistentia, id asserere.— Ibid.

^k Itaque quod ad canonizationem sanctorum attinet, omnino nego id, quod communiter doctores catholici jure optimo negant, videlicet, posse pontificem hac in parte errare. Quamvis enim testimonia, quæ pro alicujus hominis sanctitate afferuntur, sint humana, ideoque natura sua fallibilia: tamen posito quod pontifex illis inducatur tandem ad pronunciandum quempiam sanctum atque beatum jam esse; certa fide credendum est, testi-

monia illa (quatenus in genere saltem probant pie atque sancte quenquam ex hac vita excessisse) vera esse, et hominem ejusmodi ex eorum esse numero, quos per revelationes scripturæ generales in communi constant, divinæ gratiæ beneficio consequi æternæ vitæ beatitudinem. Quæ sane certitudo iisdem illis Dei promissionibus nititur, ex quibus compertum habemus, nunquam esse futurum, ut universa ecclesia in rebus religionis fallatur. Falleretur autem graviter in negotio religionis si sanctum reputaret, ac pro tali veneraretur eum, qui sanctus non est. Hic autem illud, quod alias ab orthodoxis probatum atque defensum est, tanquam ex fide certum pono, nempe rem esse omnino, quæ ad ecclesiæ ædificationem, adeoque ad officium pontificis pertineat, ut sancti quidam aliquando canonizentur: ac proinde univer-

lutely deny (as the catholic doctors upon good reasons generally do) that the pope can err in such a business." The certainty of this his belief he would ground upon those promises, by "which we are assured it shall never come to pass that the universal church can be deceived in points of religion. But the whole church should err very grossly in such matters, should it repute and worship him for a saint which is none." Here it would be observed, how Satan instigates these men unto such tenents as may occasion God and his gospel to be blasphemed. First, they would make it an article of faith, that all must believe as the pope teacheth: whence it follows, that either he cannot teach amiss, or else faith may perish from off the earth. Which if it could, God were not true in his promises. The surest pledge the Christian world can have of his fidelity in them, must be the pope's infallibility, so as from the first unto the last he must be held as true in his dealings, as God in his sayings. If he fail in canonizing a saint, whom he cannot possibly know to be such, unless he knew his heart, which belongs wholly unto his Maker; God must be a liar, and there is no truth in him. The final issue intended by Satan in these resolutions is this; When men have been a long time led on with fair hopes of gaining heaven by following the pope's direction, and yet in the end see (as who not blind sees not) his gross errors and detestable villainies, they may be hence tempted to blaspheme God, as if he had been his copartner in this cozenage. From this root (I take it) hath atheism sprung so fast in Italy. For whilst faith is in the blade, and their

sam ecclesiam debere, ut sanctum, venerari illum, quem summus pontifex, numero sanctorum adscribit; sicut etiam usus ipse

perpetuos, atque traditio ecclesiæ confirmat.—Valent. *ibid.* parag. 40.

hopes flourishing, they imagine God and the pope to be such friends as their blind guides make them; but afterwards coming to detestation of this *man of sin*, and his treachery, holding his spiritual power as ridiculous, they think either as despitefully or contemptuously of the Deity, or say with the fool in their hearts, *There is no God*¹.

The fearful
manner of
Jesuits'
tempting
God in
maintain-
ing this
argument.

3. Thus Antichrist's followers still run a course quite contrary to Christian religion. For if it be true (as it is most true) that faith cannot utterly perish from off the earth, what damnable abuse of God's mercy and favour toward mankind is this, in seeking, as the Jesuits do, to make all absolutely rely upon one in matters of faith? for so if he fail, all others must of necessity fail with him. That is, the whole world must be as kind supernatural fools to him, as that natural idiot was to his master, who being demanded, whether he would go to heaven with him or no, replied
576 he would go to hell with so good a master, seeing any man would be willing to go to heaven with an ordinary friend, yea, with his enemy. Though we should use no other argument but that, *Avoid, ye sons of Satan; for it is written, Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God*; it should, methinks, be enough to put all the Jesuits in the world unto silence in this point, did they not as far exceed their father in impudency, as they come short of him in wit. For this manner of tempting God is more shameless than the Devil's suggestion unto our Saviour, when he was instantly silenced with this reproof. A presumption it is more damnable to expect the protection or guidance of God's Spirit, in such desperate resolutions as Valentian here brings, than it were for a man to throw himself headlong from an high tower, upon hope of angelical supportance.

¹ Psalm xiv. 1.

For seeing (as I said) God hath promised, that true faith shall not perish from off the earth ; for all men to adventure their faith upon one man's infallibility, who may have less saving faith in him than Turk or infidel, is but a provoking or daring of God to recall his promise. Or what more damnable doctrine can be imagined, than that all men should worship him for a saint, whom the wickedest man on earth doth commend unto him for such ?

4. But to proceed. As the doctrine is most impious, so are the grounds of it most improbable. For how can the pope or papists infallibly know this or that man to be a saint, seeing there is no particular revelation made of it, either to the pope or others ? “ I answer,” saith Valentian, “ that the general revelation, whereby it is evident, that whatsoever the pope shall decree as pertaining to the whole church, is most true, may suffice in this case. Moreover,” saith he, “ unto the canonizing of saints appertain these revelations of scripture, in which heavenly joys are generally proposed to all such as lead a godly life. For by the pope's determination, we know the saint which he hath canonized to be contained in the foresaid universal proposition. Whence it is easy to frame an assent of faith, by which we may persuade ourselves that such a saint hath obtained eternal bliss.”

5. I would request the reader, by the way, to note the Jesuits' injurious partiality, in scoffing at such of our writers as without express warrant of particular revelation hold a certainty of their own salvation ; whenas they, only by God's general promises to such as lead a godly life, and the pope's infallibility in declaring who have so lived, can be certain (*de fide*) others are saved. But the former doubt is rather removed than quite taken away by this his answer, if it stand alone. As

yet it may be questioned, how any can infallibly know the truth of what he cannot possibly know at all, but only by other men's testimonies, in their nature (the Jesuit being judge) not infallible, and in whose examination it is not impossible his holiness may be negligent? For how men live or die in England, Spain, or the Indies, no pope can tell but by the information of others, no popes. The reader perhaps will prognosticate Valentian's answer, as in truth I did. For when I first framed the doubt before I read it in him, methought it stood in need of such a reply as Bellarmine^m brought for defence of the vulgar interpreter. Altogether as foolish it were to think any private man's information of another's uprightness in the sight of
 577 God, as to hold Theodotion the heretic could not err in translating of the Bible. But though they may be deceived in testification of another's sanctity, yet Valentianⁿ tells you, supposing the pope is "once induced by their testimonies, though in nature fallible, to pronounce him a blessed saint, all must infallibly believe their testimonies (at least so far as they prove in general that he died a godly and religious death) are true, and that the party commended by them is of that number, which (as we may gather from the general revelations of scriptures) shall be made partakers of everlasting life." Again^o, "Whether the pope in de-

^m Lib. 2. c. 31. parag. 6.

ⁿ His words be cited parag. 2.

^o Objici potest, quod, ut postea dicturi sumus, ut pontifex in definiendo autoritate sua recte utatur, studio et diligentia in inquirenda veritate opus habet. Nihil autem obstare videtur, quominus possit interdum ille, ejusmodi diligentia prætermitta, controversiam definire. Poterit igitur tunc saltem errare. Respondeo: Sive pontifex in definiendo studium adhibeat, sive non adhibeat: modo tamen controversiam definiat, infallibiliter certe definiet, atque adeo reipsa utetur autoritate sibi a Christo concessa. Quod ex promissionibus divinis de veritate per magistrum unius pastoris ecclesiæ factis certissime colligimus; ut sæ-

tur tunc saltem errare. Respondeo: Sive pontifex in definiendo studium adhibeat, sive non adhibeat: modo tamen controversiam definiat, infallibiliter certe definiet, atque adeo reipsa utetur autoritate sibi a Christo concessa. Quod ex promissionibus divinis de veritate per magistrum unius pastoris ecclesiæ factis certissime colligimus; ut sæ-

fining a controversy use diligence or no, yet without all question he shall define infallibly, and consequently use the authority Christ hath given him. Wherefore in his judgment, care and diligence are necessary to the pope, not so as if he could not define aright, or rightly use his authority without them, but that he doth not sin himself, whilst he defines an infallible truth for others to believe. Hereto may be added, that albeit a diligent care were necessarily required for the infallibility of the pope's decisions, yet the same faith which binds us to believe he decides the controversy infallibly, binds us also to believe that he used as much diligence as was requisite. As for example, in like case, If God should promise that the next year should be a plentiful year of corn, we would conceive he promised withal good and seasonable weather, and whatsoever else necessary for effecting of his promise, as Canus well notes." But Valentian's last conclusion is, "That no sure argument can be brought, why we should think study or diligence are necessary for the right use of the pope's authority, so far as it concerns other men's faith that must rely upon it." Rely upon it they must, whether he determine *ex tempore* or

pius argumentati sumus. Itaque studium ac diligentia pontifici necessaria est, non ut omnino definiat, atque infallibili sua auctoritate utatur, sed ut convenienter ac recte (hoc est, sine peccato) ea utatur: sicut patebit etiam ex iis, quæ post dicemus. Huc accedit, quod si maxime diligentia pontifici necessaria esset, ut omnino definiat; tamen eadem fide credere deberemus, illum quando rem controversam definit, sufficientem adhibuisse diligentiam; qua supra demon-

stratum est, debere nos credere, quod tunc ille infallibiliter ac vere definiat.—Cæterum non est ratio ulla firma, quam ob rem existimare debeamus, studii diligentiam pontifici necessariam esse, non modo ut convenienter, ac sine culpa, auctoritate sua infallibili utatur, verum etiam ut omnino illa utatur. Quare quod a nobis ante responsum est abunde sufficit ad id explicandum quod objiciebatur.—Val. tom. 3. in Aquin. quæst. 1. de objecto fidei, punct. 7. parag. 40.

upon deliberation, and (for aught I can see) whether he give his sentence drunk or sober, raving or in his right mind, so he have the wit to charge all, upon pain of damnation, to believe it. But what if some foreigner should of set purpose send a dead man's water to try this grand physician's skill? could he without either care or diligence in examining their testimonies, or special revelation from above, (which in such businesses Valentian disclaims,) discover their knavery? or would his prognostication of life and health redeem the party deceased from the land of death, as some say pope Gregory by his prayers did Trajan? These and many like questions might here be made, which fall not within the reach of Valentian's answers hitherto recited; and yet these must abundantly suffice for resolution of all doubts concerning the canonizing of saints, or approbation of religious orders; in which business likewise we must believe the pope cannot err^p.

578 Let the reader pause a while, look on their madness, and laugh his fill at their apish drunkenness in this argument, that when his mirth hath found a vent, and his heart is well settled, he may with a sober, impartial, steadfast eye, behold the mystery of this iniquity.

CHAP. XXXII.

What Danger by this blasphemous Doctrine may accrue to Christian States: that of all Heresies, Blasphemies, or Idolatries, which have been since the World began, or can be imagined till Christ come to Judgment, this Apostasy of the Jesuits is the most abominable and contumelious against the blessed Trinity.

1. WHAT the consequences of these positions may

P And yet some religious orders authorized by popes, have proved naught, but we must believe their rules were good whilst one pope approves them, but grew out of date and unfitting those times wherein succeeding popes did disannul them. See Valentian in the place above cited.

be, none can doubt. No less they are than I have said, a resigning up of men's souls and consciences into the pope's hands, a consecration of hearts, minds, and bodies, to work any mischief imaginable at his appointment. For what if the pope, upon the relation of Ravallac's stubbornness (they would say constancy) in his torture, or Catesby's praying to the Virgin Mary at his death, should canonize both for saints, and enjoin the Christian world so to honour them; every bloody assassinate would pray unto the one for good success in acting his bloodthirsty designs on princes' bodies. And if it should please the pope so to determine, all men should stand bound to give such solemn worship as by their doctrine is due to sacred relics, unto that bloody knife which hath been sheathed in Ravallac's sovereign's breast. Every deep dissembling politician, or ambitious cholerick discontented spirit, would burn incense, saltpetre, sulphur, and brimstone to the other's image, in hope of better speed in undermining states.

2. If any Jesuit, or other brazenfaced favourer of their order or this doctrine, should here reply—This dreamer casts doubts beyond the moon; for is there any likelihood his holiness will ever canonize such wicked imps for saints? I must answer him as Tully did Rullus, utterly disclaiming all purpose of doing such wrong unto the Roman state, as his petition unto it once granted might enable him to effect; and from my soul I wish every Christian prince, every prince's counsellor, would take that grave senator's words for his motto, *Primum nescio, deinde timeo, postremo non committam ut vestro beneficio potius quam nostro consilio salvi esse possimus*^q. First, whether the pope

^q Tibi nos, Rulle, et istis tuis harum omnium rerum machina-

toribus, totam Italiam inermem tradituros existimasti, quam præ-

would canonize such miscreants for saints or no, is more than we know. Secondly, his former practices minister so just cause of fear to Christian states, that it stands them upon rather in wisdom to prevent his power of doing than rely upon his fidelity for not doing them some inestimable mischief, by putting this practice in execution, if opportunity serve, and ability
 579 be left him thereby to strengthen his faction. Did not his legate into France^r, upon notice of the Parisian massacre, bestow his holiness's best blessing, *cum plenitudine potestatis*, "with absolute and plenary power derived from himself," upon the notorious assassinate Boydon, chief ringleader of that immane and wolfish massacre committed at Lyons, begun without any warrant of public authority, only at this hellish miscreant's instigation, desirous to follow, or rather outgo, his superiors in cruelty? Was not that villainy itself authorized from Rome, where it found such extraordinary approbation? Never did that city rejoice so much in memory of Christ's birth or St. Peter's, as at the hearing of this more than Herodian butchery of so many thousands noble-minded gentlemen, with other innocents and saints of God. So full was this legate's

sidiis confirmaretis? colonis occuparetis? omnibus vinclis devinctam et obstrictam teneretis? ubi enim cavetur, ne in Janiculo coloniam constituatis? ne urbem hanc urbe alia premere, atque urgere possitis? non faciemus, inquit. Primum nescio, &c.—De leg. Agrar. orat. 15.

^r Fabius Ursinus cardinalis a pontifice, post acceptum de Parisiensi tumultu nuncium, legatus in Galliam venit.—Igitur ille ubi Lugdunum venit, more solemniter acceptus, multis laudibus civium fidem extulit, et Boi-

dono illo lanienæ immanis antesignano palam laudato, etiam ei potestatis plenitudine gratiæ beneficium impertivit; et quam a regiis ministris ex Johannis Morvillerii consilio monitus, ut sobrie et parce de ea re loqueretur, non potuit sibi temperare, quin regis in eo negotio prudentiam, patientiam, animi magnitudinem, publice et in privatis colloquiis ubique apud omnes etiam cum delectu verborum commendaret.—Thuan. lib. 54. [cap. 18.] anno 1572.

heart of joy hence conceived, that after he came into France, out of the abundance of it, his mouth did sound the praises of the bloody actors and contrivers of this shameful tragedy, *etiam cum delectu verborum*, “with such choice and affected words,” as caused them blush to hear him that had not been ashamed to act the villainy. And as if this excellent exploit had been effected by virtue of the holy catholic church, the pope’s petition^s to the French king was, That the Trent council might, upon that good success, begin to be of force in France, and be thus sealed with blood. Yet can any man doubt whether this church would authorize murder, or canonize assassins, for her own advantage? Publicly suppose she would not; yet if

^s Postea cum rege colloquutus inter alia multis et enixis precibus ac rationibus ab eo contendit, ut concilium Tridentinum, cujus publicationem, totum jam novennium in Gallia, magna cum universi Christiani orbis offensione suspensam agebat, in regni curiis promulgaretur, et recentis facti omnibus sæculis deprædicandi, quod ad Dei gloriam, et S. R. E. dignitatem pertineret, memoria sacrosanctæ synodi approbatione veluti obsignaretur. Sic enim apud omnes tam qui sunt, quam qui postea erunt, constitutum, non odio, aut ultione, aut privatæ injuriæ sensu regem in tot capitum perniciem consensisse, sed ardenti Dei gloriæ propagandæ studio a Christianissimo principe datum, ut quod stante protestantium factione sperari non poterat, iis sublati, majorum religio, hoc est, catholica apostolica Romana, quæ per synodum Tridentinam a sectario veneno asseritur, citra controversiam ac sine exceptione per universas

Franciæ ditionis provincias constitueretur. Idem, *ibid.* Unless the French king had been enforced to make a contrary apology before this legate came into France, this bloody massacre had been authorized by the see apostolical; as appears from the same author’s words immediately following. His et aliis rationibus sæpius apud regem repetitis, quæ magni in aula Romana ponderis, plerisque etiam apud nos speciosæ videbantur, quo minus rex ac regina acquiescerent, obstabant jam sumpta ad excusandum factum consilia. Nam diplomatis postea promulgatis rex contra contestabatur, non odio religionis, sed ad revincendam Coliniac sequacium detestandam conjurationem, quæ jussu suo Lutetiæ acta essent, accidisse; exemplumque ad cæteras urbes injussu ac magno suo cum dolore grassatum esse: idque literis, orationibus ac libellis illis, de quibus diximus, ubique inculcatur.

the pope's decrees, when they expressly bind all, must, as Valentian contends, be believed by all upon such terms as he annexeth ; no question but if he give any special injunction to the order of Jesuits, or such as they shall adjudge fit associates to whom these secrets may be imparted, it shall be as devoutly entertained by them whom it concerns as if it were universal. If charged they be, under pain of damnation, secretly to worship this or that damned villain, it will be held a formal denial of faith, either not to perform what is enjoined, or to bewray what they perform. We may well suppose the Jesuits, and others of their instruction, have more saints in their private calendars than 580 all the world knows of. Bellarmine^t grants "the pope

^t Notandum est, duobus modis posse aliquem canonizari, uno modo particulariter, ita ut solum in una provincia, aut diocesi habeatur sanctus, et colatur pro sancto. Alio modo generaliter, ita ut in tota ecclesia habeatur pro sancto, nec ulli liceat de ejus sanctitate dubitare. Primo modo canonizare poterat quilibet episcopus, ut docet Thomas Waldens. lib. de Sacramental. tit. 14. c. 122. et patet ex Cypriano l. 3. Epist. 6.—Tamen hoc, quod olim licuit, modo non licet, siquidem Alexander III. et postea Innocentius III. videntes abusus, qui oriebantur circa sanctorum cultum, prohibuerunt, ne deinceps aliquis pro sancto coli inciperet, sine Romani pontificis approbatione, ut patet c. 1 et 2. de reliquiis et sanctorum veneratione. Secundo modo canonizare ; id est, ita ut in tota ecclesia sancti habeantur, communis sententia est, pertinere ad summum pontificem : nam id habetur c. Audivimus, &c.

Cum ex eo de reliquiis, et veneratione sanctorum, &c. venerabili, de testibus et attestationibus. Et patet etiam ratione ; nam ad eum spectat proponere toti ecclesiæ quid sit credendum, et quid agendum in iis quæ sunt religionis, qui toti ecclesiæ præest.—Dices, plurimi sancti sunt, qui in tota ecclesia coluntur, quos non canonizavit summus pontifex : primus enim pontifex (ni forte fallor) qui sanctos legatur canonizasse, videtur fuisse Leo papa III.—Respondeo, Sanctos veteres cœpisse coli in ecclesia universali, non tam lege aliqua, quam consuetudine. Sed sicut consuetudines aliæ vim habent legis ex tacito consensu principis, et sine eo nullam vim habent, ut patet ex B. Thoma, 1, 2. quæst. 97. art. 3 ; ita sancti alicujus cultus, ex consuetudine ecclesiarum generaliter introductus, vim habet ex approbatione tacita vel expressa summi pontificis.—Bellarm. c. 8. de Sanct.

may commend some under the title of saints unto a set province or diocess, though he enjoin not the whole church so to esteem, or at least not so to entertain them: that saints reputed, not canonized, may be privately adored; that in this case a general custom may prescribe, and breed just presumption of the pope's tacit approbation, though he give no direct injunction for the practice, nor positive signification of his consent. For many were adored as saints before the solemnity of canonizing was in use, first practised" (as far as this great clerk's reading serves him) "by pope Leo the Third."

3. Now as their projects are of another mould, and their means to effect them more desperate than heretofore; so these intimations make it more than suspicious, lest secretly they crown such of every sort as have been best qualified for their purposes, or have adventured farthest for the church's dignity, with the titles of saints, to encourage others to like attempts. And if turbulent or ambitious spirits, greedy of fame, may be fed with hopes of being eternized in Jesuitical calendars; if men malecontented with this present may have sweet promises of everlasting happiness in the life to come; upon what mischiefs will they not adventure? whenas the one sort is weary of life, the other curbed only with fear of present shame or disgrace after death, otherwise ready to rush into any danger, or avow most desperate outrages. Albeit the parties proposed to be worshipped had been in their lifetimes not so bad, but rather incited to bold enterprises by their ardent zeal; yet who would not desire to imitate the adventurous actions of them whose

Beat. lib. 1. Vide eundem c. 10. aliis, sed non nomine totius ecclesię. scilicet, Sanctos non canonizatos privatim posse coli et coram

memory he adores? And yet this longing desire of imitating such extraordinary enterprises, as others of noble spirits have been thrust upon by secret instinct, is always dangerous, and in men not so well qualified as their authors were, preposterous. For it will find occasions of like practice when none is given; virtue shall be the object of despite, because in factious oppositions contempt of it may afford matter of glory; hatred and malice to princes' persons shall be accounted zeal and devotion to the church. But if powder-plotters or public assassins may be dignified with titles of saints, or proposed for imitation, the Christian world may perceive the height whereto this mischief may grow, when it will be too late to control it. It is an
 581 excellent caveat which old Gerson^u hath, not impertinent to this purpose, though intended by him especially for private use. Amongst other sophisms used by Satan to ensnare men's souls, "that topic of examples or similes affords as many experiments of fallacies as there be men; whilst every one strives to imitate any one, and professeth to frame his life by the example of such as either the church doth canonize, or their superiors, governors, doctors, or men of fame approve.

^u *Caterum de locis ab exemplo, et simili, tot sunt experimenta fallaciarum, quot hominum capita, dum quilibet assequi vult quemlibet, dum exemplo dicit se vivere talium et talium, quos approbat aut canonizat ecclesia, vel qui superiores eorum sunt, qui rectores, qui doctores, qui laudati. Quid facit filius, aiunt, nisi quod viderit patrem facientem, patres tamen optimos ipsi nolunt, sed pessimos hoc exemplo sequi. Vox aliorum est; Paulus se laudavit, Paulus visiones in raptu suscepit; cur non*

potest modo Dominus in talibus et talibus similia operari? Hinc confictio prophetiarum, hinc miraculorum admonitio. Hinc etiam adoratio damnatorum hominum in populis. Testis est mihi legenda, imo de adoratione canis mortui visum est in Vienna. Caveat igitur sancta sedes Romana, caveat in ea sedens papa, quibus argumentis et causis et mediis canonizatio alicujus sit facienda. Gerson. tractat. 8. de Custodia Angelorum, part. 3. super Magnificat.

What doth the son (say some) but what he sees the father do? and yet these mates follow not the best, but the worst fathers;” (at least that in them which is worst for them to follow.) “ By this example, some of them stick not to say, Paul commended himself, Paul had visions in a trance, and why may not God in these days work the like effects in others? Hence are prophecies feigned, hence are admonitions by miracles, hence are damned persons adored by the multitude; witness the legend; yea, and Vienna can bear witness of a dead dog’s adoration. Let the sacred Roman see therefore beware, let the pope that sits therein beware, upon what grounds or motives they canonize any.”

4. Rather let all Christian states beware, lest they give such authority to either. For if the danger were not always imminent from their traitorous and blood-thirsty minds that profess this doctrine in any kingdom, yet from Divine justice the plagues upon prince and people, that authorize and permit the profession of it, will be one day public and grievous. For better might they nurse all other kinds of enchantments or magical practices; better might they give harbour to all other heresies broached since the world began; than suffer this ocean of all mischiefs, whether flowing from errors in manners or matters of doctrine, to encroach upon their coasts. And here let not the reader deceive himself, by imagining the Holy Ghost had used a metaphor, rather than strict propriety of speech, when he called the whore of Babylon a witch or enchantress. For the faith whereby the Romanist boasts he believes the scriptures (as elsewhere, God willing, shall be shewed) is merely magical: this doctrine we now dispute against, the very idea of infernal superstition, or, as they term it, *vana observantia*, in

That Jesuitical doctrine in this argument is truly and properly witchcraft or sorcery.

respect of the essence and quality ; and for the extent of mischief whereto it leads, as the main sea of sorcery, and all other kinds of magical superstition as so many brooks or rivers. For whence springs sorcery properly so called ? Either from express compact with evil spirits, or from the solemn performance of certain blind ceremonies, which are but sacrifices unto infernal powers ; wherein they gain interest in the sacrificers' souls, in witness whereof they sometimes bear their marks in their bodies. But if we look into the mystery of this iniquity, the Jesuits, by subscribing unto this doctrine of the church's transcendent authority, and taking the solemn oath of their order, enter a covenant, though not so express or immediate, yet 582 more firm and desperate than other magicians usually do. For they swear, and teach others to swear, absolute obedience to the pope : they think themselves bound, and would bind others, not to examine his decrees ; to esteem of his pardons, though destitute of all warrant from God's word, as highly as the magicians do of charms, for which they can give no reason either in art or nature ; to offer up their prayers and other religious worship unto such as he shall appoint them, albeit, for ought they know, or as they justly may suspect, damned miscreants ; which is a more hellish sacrifice than any other magicians use. And though witches do, yet all sorts of sorcerers enter not express covenant with the prince of darkness. And it is all one, whether like witches they give their souls to him immediately, or thus absolutely betroth them to his proxy or principal agent here on earth. For as the apostle instructs us, by thus worshipping the *beast* they worship the *dragon* his master.

5. Lastly, in respect of this mouth of blasphemy, Mahometism and Gentilism are as a toy. The an-

cient heathen, out of their inbred ignorance, and want of external means for right information of their understanding, *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the similitude of corruptible things*; often taxed by mere philosophers for their grossness. These blasphemers, though professing the worship of the ever-living, true, and only God, though partakers of his written word, and all the helps his gracious providence from time to time hath afforded for manifestation of its right sense and meaning, abuse philosophy (wherein they excel), with all other gifts of art and nature, to transform the most essential attributes of the Divine nature; to turn his truth into lies, his goodness into all abomination. For having this natural notion in their brain—Whatsoever God saith is true, whatsoever he approves most just and good; their next presumptuous assumption is—But God saith whatsoever the Romish church or pope saith *ex cathedra*, whatsoever he allows, God allows the same. And this assertion, which thus confounds the limits of God's truth and the pope's, that the Christian world cannot discern one from another, once wrought in men's hearts, what untruth or falsehood, what heresy can be hatched so dangerous, what villainy conceived so abominable, but may be presently fathered upon that Holy One, from whom proceeds nothing but good? Thus may bloody and prodigious massacres be invested with the most glorious titles the best of Christ's saints ever enjoyed for their best deeds. Just reward for matchless impieties that benefit them may be set forth to the world as the crown of martyrdom. Finally, their gain is hereby made the measure of goodness; their pomp and glory, the rule of piety and end of every Christian's faith, unto which he must not stick to sacrifice his soul, as an *holocaustum* ever burning,

That this doctrine inverts the whole frame of Christian religion.

never consuming, in that brimstone lake. If it shall please the pope to authorize murder, though of the Lord's anointed, God the Son must be the chief assassinate to give power and strength, and heaven for the reward unto the actor. If pleased he be to give way to incest, as for the uncle to marry the niece, a fornication not named but with distaste amongst the ancient heathens, (I would abhor to speak it, would they be ashamed to give just occasion,) the Holy Ghost must
 583 not disdain to be his bawd or pander. If disposed to dispense with perjury, God the Father must be as his vassal, to suffer disgrace at his appointment, to recall the sentence of vengeance which the party swearing by his name did imprecate upon his own head, if he relented. Though this be the greatest injury that can be offered to so great a Majesty, (unto whom execution of just vengeance properly belongs,) yet must the Almighty, at the pope's appointment, be content to put it up.

6. It is a quality in kings, very commendable, saith Paulus Quartus ^x, legate and nephew unto Henry of France, "religiously to observe their oaths: but when the pope's dignity comes into danger, religion itself is in hazard, and a preposterous course it were religiously to observe an oath unto the overthrow of religion." With these and the like suggestions, im-

^x Sed multos, ut audio, qui apud te plurimum possunt, fidei datæ ac jurisjurandi pactis interpositi religio movet, qua ut nihil principi antiquius esse debere minime inficias ierim, ita eos, qui pietatem suæ opinioni prætexunt, videre etiam atque etiam oportet, ne dum rigidi religionis auctores haberi volunt, religionem ipsam in discrimen addu-

cant; quod proculdubio accidet, si pontificem tam necessario tempore deseras, ad cujus defensionem et majorum exemplum, et fides nuper data, et tua denique te pietas obligat; quæ omnia prius violes, et divina atque humana jura confundas necesse est, si induciarum pactis stare velis. —Thuanus Hist. l. 17. [c. 7.] ann. 1556.

piously acute, did this sweet cardinal, by commission from the pope^y his master, authorize and animate this French king to violate the league lately confirmed by solemn oath betwixt him and Philip of Spain. Might he not as justly, though not so politicly, in plain terms have told him, Either you must dishonour God, or suffer the pope to be disgraced; choose which you list? Doubtless in the language of God's Spirit, which searcheth the heart, he that dispenseth with an oath (of this nature especially) solemnly taken, is greater than he by whom men swear; and is in heart and deed so esteemed, by such as acknowledge his authority in thus dispensing, or sue unto him for like dispensations. But as if wilful and open perjury, without deep and hellish hypocrisy, were a sin too plain and simple for the Man of sin to countenance; the legate^z first invests this besotted prince with the glorious title of *Defensor Ecclesiæ Romanæ*; and in witness hereof delivers him a sword, consecrated by his holiness's own hand, ere he make him forswear himself, and forsake his God, *who hath now forsaken him*, and for his sin (scarce expiated unto this day) plagued the realm of France. For as the judicious historian (who hath the articles of this perfidious confederacy yet in his custody) well observes^a, this was

^y Tandem bellum pro pontificis defensione decretum; postquam Carafa regem jurisjurandi induciarum pactis interpositi religionis, potestati sibi a pontifice tradita, solvit, libertatemque ei fecit, in Cæsarem et ejus F. etiam sine præcedenti belli denunciatione impetum facere.—Ibid. paulo post.

^z Hac fiducia fretus Carafa regem aggreditur, et gladio sacro pontificis nomine ei ut

ecclesiæ R. defensori magna pompa ac ceremonia porrecto, ad privatum colloquium admissus, quo in statu res Romana ac familiæ suæ fortuna sit, demonstrat.—Ibidem paulo ante locum primo citatum.

^a Nunc ingredimur annum 57. supra quingentesimum et millesimum, juxta Caroli sapientissimi principis augurium Galliæ funestissimum: quo res nostræ per inducias in tuto collocatæ,

the root of all the miseries have since befallen that flourishing kingdom, and by God's just judgments exposed it to the insolencies of the Spaniard, through their means especially that wrought the king to breach of his oath with Spain for entering this new confederacy with the pope.

7. Whilst reading this story, I called to mind the
584 perfidious and cruel usage of that renowned admiral^b in the Parisian massacre: the treacherous impiety of his politic enemies seemed highly to extol the wisdom and justice of his God, calling him to suffer his chastisement in this life, that he might not perish with the wicked, or such as were impenitent for their former grievous sin; wherein this worthy counsellor had in some sort (though with grief, yet for the good of others I must utter it) communicated with the pope and his perjured sovereign. For knowing the breach of peace was fully resolved upon by the state of France, he thought it a point of warlike wisdom to

improba Carafarum suggestionē, et ambitiosa quorundam levitate in manifestum exitium præcipitata sunt, et regnum hoc hactenus florentissimum ab eo tempore bellis civilibus diu jactatum, tandem per illos ipsos belli auctores Hispanorum prædæ, et ludibrio patuit.—Thuanus, lib. Histor. 18. in initio, anno 1557.

^b Rex a Carafis sollicitatus—negotium dederat Colinio maris præfecto et Picardiæ præsidi, ut in hostico ex improvise aliquid conaretur.—Is quanquam invitus faceret, ut inducias, quas solenni jurejurando ipse firmaverat, violaret, tamen cum res eo deductas videret, ut bello inter Hispanos et pontificem exardescente reges necessario ad arma

descensuri essent, antevertendum duxit, et insigni aliquo facinore hostem præveniendum. Itaque noctu cum prope oppidum 8 id. Jan. marcentibus vino oppidanis insidias struxisset, a vetula tamen insomni proditus est, quæ vix tandem improbo clamore excitatis vigiliis conatum nostrorum irritum reddidit, inde Colinius Lentium (medium inter insulam et Regiacum Atrebatum municipium, quod Nimetacum olim fuisse autumant) vi capit, diripit, et licentiose habitum postremo incendit, ingentique præda abacta cum plusculos dies in limite excurrisset, ad suos revertitur, hoc ruptarum induciarum initium fuit, &c.—Ibid.

begin with the enemy in his own land, rather than expect his onset upon notice of war proclaimed : and fair opportunity (as he apprehends it) being offered from an insinuating heremite's discovering of the situation, and readiest way of expugning Doway, he attempts the surprisal of it ; but prevented of his purpose by an old woman that awaked the garrison, he deemed it a shame to return home with empty hands ; though fill them he could not, but with just imputation of being the first that had actually broken the league, as afterwards his venerable person was the first upon whom these perfidious assassins and actors in the Parisian massacre did practise their intended butchery, contrary to the oath and faith which they had given him. God grant such as in reformed churches do most detest, be never tempted by like opportunities to imitate, the worldly policies of the papacy ; that all our consultations to prevent their malice may always relish more of the dove's innocence and integrity than of the serpent's subtlety.

8. He that would accurately observe the weak supportance of the Roman see at that time, when the French could not relieve it ; how since that time the popes have muffled themselves into the Spaniard's favour, to the great prejudice of France, who in love to them had brought itself so low ; may by these modern stories easily discern the papacy's advancement in times past to have been wrought by such means as our writers out of ancient records have deciphered. Especially by sowing enmity betwixt Christian princes, by seeking supportance now from one, then from another, as several popes, for the most part bystanders in such broils, yet skilful to bet always on the fairest side, saw fittest occasions ; until at length they got both feet on princes' shoulders, and being once mount-

ed, learned cunning to sit fast, and ride them safely. For most of that succession being still of several lines and different parentages, none of them were disposed to continue any ancient or hereditary foehood with the posterity of their predecessors' greatest enemies, as lineal descents of royal families, out of their personal love unto their ancestors, usually do, unto the great damage of their state and country. It is significantly spoken by the Evangelist, that *the ten kings should give their authority unto the beast*^c; thereby instructing us, that Antichrist should grow great by princes' favours and gracious privileges bestowed upon him, 585 not, as the Jesuit absurdly imagines, by taking authority unto himself by strong hand before it was given, as the Turks, or Saracens, or other barbarians have done.

But to proceed: not the infidelity of Turk, of Jew, or Saracen, not malignant apostasy is to be compared with this kind of idolatry and blasphemy we now dispute against. The Turk calumniates the cross, the Jew accuseth Christ himself as an impostor; but neither make him author or approver of such impieties as they commit. The Jesuit fathers such prodigious villainies as his soul from Satan's suggestion hath conceived upon his Saviour; all other heretics, or idolaters, Turks, infidels, or apostates, do then only or principally offer contumelies unto Christ and Christianity, when they open their mouths and vent their bitterness against him. But of this whore and her attendants that proverb is most truly verified, *Sive scortum benedicat sive maledicat perinde est*. The contumelies offered by them to Christ are all one (always most grievous) whether they bless or curse, whether they magnify or blaspheme his holy name.

^c Rev. xvii. 12.

Whilst they profess such absolute allegiance to the pope, the *son of perdition*, Christ's greatest enemy, in taking our Redeemer's praises in their mouths, they do but add profane scurrility unto blasphemy, using him herein more contemptuously than the soldiers, which bowed their knees unto him, but buffet his face; salute him as a king, and yet wound his head by putting a crown of thorns upon it.

9. But some out of charity, not to be blamed, will here demand: Do all the maintainers of this strange doctrine expressly and wittingly conceive as meanly or despitefully of Christ as these dissolute Roman soldiers did, though willing (for their own advantage) to cloak their secret scoffs and mockery of his spiritual kingdom with outward demeanour more decent and reverent than the others used? Do all the learned of that religion in heart approve that commonly reported saying of Leo the Tenth, *Quantum profuit nobis fabula Christi?* and yet resolve (as cardinal Carafa^d did, *Quoniam populus iste vult decipi, decipiatur*) to nuzzle the people in their credulity? For mine own part, as yet I cannot think so, though I have been friendly censured for saying the contrary. Many of them, I am persuaded, think they honour Christ as much as the best in the reformed churches do. But doth this their conceit, or imaginary love to him, lessen their wrong, in respect of those contumelies offered him by the heathen? Rather (in the learned) it is a

^d Inde, Carafa Lutetiam regni metropolim tanquam pontificis legatus solita pompa ingreditur, ubi cum signum crucis, ut fit, ederet, verborum, quæ proferri mos est, loco, ferunt eum, ut erat securo de numine animo, et summus religionis derisor, occur-

sante passim populo et ingenua ad ipsius conspectum procumbente, sæpius secreta murmuratione hæc verba ingeminasse: "Quandoquidem populus iste vult decipi, decipiatur."—Thuanus, l. Hist. 17. [c. 7.] an. 1556.

symptom of that grievous plague inflicted upon the Jews, *that seeing they should not see, that hearing they should not hear nor understand*; no sign at all of better real affection towards Christ, but rather a token of greater servility unto Satan, or of that strange spiritual drunkenness spoken of by the Evangelist. Their hearts and heads are not acquainted; the one indites what Satan suggests, and moves their outward members to act what he commands; the other interprets all done in honour of Christ, as if a man should be so deeply intoxicated with some pleasant poison, as to enforce it upon his dearest friend for an extraordinary dainty. Finally, that these great clerks should thus acknowledge Christ for the Redeemer of the world, and yet admit every pope for his compeer, and thus devoutly embrace the doctrine of devils, is an undoubted document they are the sworn followers of 586 *him, whose coming is by the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and in all deceivableness of unrighteousness amongst them that perish*. That which especially causeth many of us to doubt whether the Jesuits do not equivocate when they speak well of Christ, is, because their learning and judgment are on the one side so great, and this imagination on the other so prodigiously absurd and sottish, as one cannot possibly better brook the other's company in the same heart or brain, than the most flourishing prince or potentate in the world could the beastliest sluttish she-fool living for the only consort of his bed; howsoever these cunning panders, in pride of their nimble wits, may hope to betroth more simple souls unto this outcast of hell. And though experience in some sort hath proved it true, that no opinion was ever proposed so absurd but found some philosopher for its patron; yet this imagination of the pope's

transcendent authority far exceeds the limits of any experiments or observation made in philosophers answerable to the former axiom. Notwithstanding, the more their infatuation (of whom we speak) exceeds the bounds of all folly or vanity merely natural, the more it ascertains to us the truth of the apostle's prediction in the place late cited. Doubtless, *because they received not the love of the truth, therefore hath God sent them strong delusions, that they should believe lies*^e. The fulfilling of which prophecy is most conspicuous in the modern Jesuits, the principal maintainers of this doctrine. For were they not men of rare wit and exquisite learning; were not this opinion withal, of all that are or can be imagined, the most sottishly improbable, and preposterously impious; the print of God's finger, thus confounding their brain, could not be so eminent or discernible. The first bait, cast out by Satan, was but to draw the Romish clergy unto practices so suspicious amongst the people that they could not be justified but by a conceit of infallibility; and not checking their pride, being challenged of error in doctrine, and impiety in their dealings, the Lord gave them over to believe this monster of falsehood and untruth, a bottomless pit of hypocritical preposterous blasphemies.

10. Would to God the daily ambitious practices of many that are or would be in great place amongst us, the proneness of most to transgress the bounds of lawful authority, and their unreadiness to recall their errors though never so gross, their extreme impatience of all impeachment by men, as far their superiors in spiritual graces as their inferiors in secular dignity, did not plainly shew the passage from that point where these men's resolutions anchor unto this new

^e 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.

Tyre, the rock of honour and seat of pride, to be but short, and the transportation easy, if opportunities of time and tide did serve them ! But of the particular temptations and opportunities that did first drive the Romanists into this harbour, as also of inveterate errors in other points, and relics of heathenish dispositions, whereby they tow others after them, elsewhere, (according to my promise,) if God permit. At this time it shall suffice to have waded thus far in these unpleasant passages, for discovering the enemy's weakness in his new fortifications, or repalliations rather of such breaches as our ancient worthies have made in their imaginary rock of strength. Now, as my soul and conscience in the sight of God and his holy angels
587 can assure me, these imputations of blasphemy, sorcery, and preposterous idolatry, I have laid upon this fundamental point of Romish faith, are most true, though much less exaggerated than it deserves ; so again, I must confess, it hath in some sort ever gone against my conscience publicly to decipher or display her abominations. For my little experience of this present age's temper too well instructs me, what great offence is oftentimes hereby given to men, as weak in faith as strong in their persuasions of it, to flatter themselves in their hypocrisy, or make them seem unto themselves men rightly religious or thoroughly sanctified, whilst they measure their love to true religion by their hatred unto this *doctrine of devils*, or compare themselves with priests and Jesuits, as they are painted out in their native colours by eloquent and learned pastors. But his iniquity be upon his own head, that thus perverts my labours, undertaken for his good, unto his harm. For unto a quite contrary purpose have I set forth this survey of Romish blasphemy, in a larger volume than first I meant it, even to stir up

myself, and every professor of true religion, unto serious amendment of our lives, to hold fast our faith, by holding up hands pure from bribery and corruption, by lifting up hearts and minds void of all guile and hypocrisy, ardently zealous of every good work, unto the Lord our God continually;—lest such swarms of caterpillars and locusts, as have chosen Beelzebub for their God, devour this land, *mortis modus morte pejor*. To think such should be the instruments of our woe, will unto most of us, I know, far surpass all conceit of any other woe itself, or misery, that in this life can befall us. And yet, whilst I consider what God hath done of old to Israel his firstborn, and Judah his own inheritance; the overplus of our ingratitude towards him for all his goodness, especially our wilful continual abusing these days of peace, more and more sweet and gracious than Jerusalem itself, the vision of peace, did ever see so long together without interruption; I am, and have been, as my public meditations can testify, for these few years of my ministry, possessed with continual dread, lest the Lord in justice enlarge his threatenings denounced against Judah upon this land. Fearful was that message unto Jerusalem, *I will bring the most wicked of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses*^f; but more terrible is our doom, if this sentence be gone out against us—I will plague you by the wickedest amongst the Christians; by men more cruel, proud, and insolent, than Babylonian, Turk, or infidel, or any other enemy of Christ's church hath been, or could be, unless Christians or Jesuits in name or show, they were mere Antichristian, or Bar-jesus, in heart and affection. Such titles we readily give, and willingly hear given unto Loyola's infamous brood. But if our ways shall continually

^f Ezek. vii. 24.

prove as odious unto our God, as these terms import that society is unto us, what have we done? Surely tied our bodies to the stake of justice by the wickedness of our hands and proud imaginations of our polluted hearts; whiles our tongues, in the mean while, have set our cruel executioners' hearts on fire more grievously to torment, to consume and devour us.

11. But though likelihood of their prevailing against us be, without our repentance, great, and their cruelty, if they should prevail, more than likely to be most violent, yet this their hope it cannot be long.

588 *Tu quoque crudelis Babylon dabis impia pœnas,
Et rerum instabiles experire vices.*

The Lord in due time will turn again the captivity of his people, and the now living may live to see these sons of Babel rewarded, as they have long sought to serve us. Their shameless apologies for equivocation, and this old charm of *Templum Domini*, which, like unlucky birds always flocking, or frogs croaking against ill weather, they have resumed of late with joint importunate cries, (albeit with these they bewitch the simple, and choke the worldling or careless liver, that accounts all serious thoughts of religion his greatest trouble,) sound unto hearts settled in grace, or minds illuminated with the Spirit of truth, but as the last cracklings of Lucifer's candle, sometime shining in the Roman lanthorn as the morning-star, or an angel of light, but now so far spent and sunk within the socket, that it recovers its wonted brightness but by flashes; nor can his nostrils (that is able with the least breath of his displeasure from heaven in a moment to blow it out) any long time endure the smell. Even so, O Father, for thy Son Christ Jesus' sake; even so, O Christ, for thine elect and chosen's sake, impose a period to our grievous sins against thee, and our enemies' malice

against us : infatuate their policies, enfeeble their strength, and prevent them in their devilish purposes, that seek to prevent thee in thy judgments, by setting the world in combustion before thy coming. Amen.



*The Continuation of Matters prosecuted in the First 589
Book.*

THE ingenious reader, I trust, rests fully satisfied, that for planting true and lively faith in every private Christian's heart, experiments answerable to the rules of scripture, without absolute dependance upon any external rule thereto equivalent, are sufficient ; the assistance of the Holy Spirit (whose necessity for the right apprehension of divine truths revealed, the Romanist nor doth nor dare deny) being supposed ; that Valentian's heart did tell him thus much, and secretly check him for his ridiculous curiosity to make way unto his circular resolution of faith before refuted^g, his diffident speeches immediately thereto annexed (upon consciousness, no doubt, of its insufficiency) will give the reader (though partial) just cause of suspicion. " If a man," saith he, " be yet further questioned, seeing

^g Lib. 2. cap. 30. parag. 16, 17, &c. Si autem quis demum rogetur cum et revelatio et propositio infallibilis obscuræ et in-evidentes sint, quid ipsum impulerit, ut hunc quasi labyrinthum rerum obscurissimarum ingressus sit ad fidem modo dicto acceptandam, hoc est, ad credendum revelationem propter ecclesiæ propositionem, tanquam propter conditionem requisitam, et hanc vicissim propter revelationem tanquam propter causam

credendi : veniat tum ad illum alterum secundum processum et rationes, atque motiva clariora exponat, quibus et ipse inductus fuit, et quibus prudens induci possit, ad acceptandam ejusmodi fidem, quantumvis secundum se inevidentem et obscuram. Id quod luculenter disserere licebit, cognitis communibus motivis nostræ fidei.—Valent. tom. 3. in Aquin. disput. 1. quæst. 1. de object. fidei, punct. 1. parag. 10.

as well the divine revelations as the church's infallible proposal are obscure and inevident, what should impel him to enter into such a labyrinth of obscurities, as to embrace the doctrine of faith by the former method; (to wit, believing the revelation for the church's proposal, as for a condition unto belief requisite; and the church's proposal again for the revelation, being the cause of his belief;) then let him come unto the second process, (or method,) and expound the reasons and clearer motives, whereby he was, and every discreet man may be, induced to embrace faith, though of itself inevident and obscure." Thus do they traduce the grace of God, as if there were no difference betwixt midday light and midnight darkness; as if *the dawning of that daystar in our hearts*, or light of prophets our apostle speaks of, 2 Pet. i. 19, were not a mean betwixt that more than demonstrative evidence of divine truths which glorified saints enjoy, and obscurity or Jewish blindness. The particular manner how God's Spirit works lively faith, by such experiments as partly I did and hereafter must acquaint him withal, the reader, I hope, will gather of his own accord out of the discourses following, concerning the nature of Christian faith, and the principal objects thereof, whereunto my meditations are now addressed, my long durance in this unpleasant subject having bred in my soul a more eager thirst after these well-springs of life.

END OF VOL. II.



